Muslim Intellectual History: A Survey

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Abstract

This article strives to chart the intellectual history of Muslims and the trans-civilizational, discursive tradition of Islam spanning fourteen centuries. It chronicles the scholarly projects shaping Islamic thought as they developed in the wake of the Prophet's (s) death and intensified in the ensuing centuries despite the numerous changes and tumultuous times the Muslim *ummah* encountered. Together with an accompanying map and visual timeline, it endeavors to empower students of Islam in general and Islamic Studies programs in particular with an appreciation of the

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breadth and depth of Muslim intellectual history. The article begins by tracing the foundation of early regional centers, the side-by-side formation of disciplines, the development of the various legal schools as well as the many strains of Islamic thought, and how they not only influenced one another but also became absorbed into mainstream Islam, ending with an overview of the impact of modernity on Islamic thought. Through this effort, I hope that students will be able to cultivate a rudimentary understanding of Islamic scholarship in its historical context, make interdisciplinary connections, critically engage with the individual disciplines in their focused study, and gain an overall nuanced reverence for the collective Muslim intellectual legacy across 1400 years along with the diversified scholarly struggles to diligently honor and observe the message received from the Prophet Muhammad (s).

Introduction

Muslim intellectual history is rich and complex. It started as a simple effort to continue to live according to the *Sunnah* in the aftermath of the Prophet's (s) death, became refined over time, and also branched into new directions even as it remained grounded in core revelatory concepts. Yet, too often, students of Islam in general and Islamic Studies programs in particular learn the core disciplines of Qur'an, *hadith*, and *fiqh* along with secondary subjects such as Sufism, theology, and philosophy as discrete blocks of knowledge. While these are fundamental to any curriculum devoted to introducing students to Islamic sciences, their gains in learning can be ahistorical and devoid of context. Frequently, such programs rely on the previous knowledge of students to make important connections that may or may not be possible due to the diversity in student population and their uneven prior exposure to Islam. Moreover, they do not enable students to truly understand the evolution of inherited knowledge and the interdisciplinary exchanges that took place historically, thereby making it difficult to see their relevance in today's day and age.

Whereas students are taught *ʿulum al-Qur'an*, *ʿulum al-hadith*, and *fiqh* as distinct disciplines, they actually developed in tandem and

impacted one another in lasting ways; these linkages are evident when we hear the same scholarly names recurrently mentioned in *'ulum al-hadith*, *fiqh*, and *usul al-fiqh* courses. Furthermore, the *'ulama* (religious scholars) continued to be affected by internal debates as shaped by external factors. While most of these ideas were at first considered strange and deviating from the norm, eventually many were absorbed into mainstream Islamic thought, as shown throughout the article. Scholars, teachers, and imams sometimes allude to these phenomena but these connections are often glossed over due to limitations of time or the need to focus on the subject at hand. Hence, the objective of this survey is to closely follow the trajectory of Muslim intellectual history with the purpose of illuminating these interactions and the outcomes they produced so that students are able to grasp the historical debates and shifts that have resulted in our present received knowledge as well as the salient narratives today.

In accomplishing this goal, I benefited immensely from contemporary academic texts in English and relied on this literature heavily to piece together the story of Muslim intellectual history; one can see the range of these resources in the endnotes. Early on, it became clear to me that, contrary to what many people may naturally think, it was *hadith* not the Qur'an that became the crux around which much of Islamic scholarship and intra-Muslim debates formed in the early period of our intellectual history. The Qur'an had become fixed during the caliphate of 'Uthman (ra) and it was the far more fluid *hadith* that led to disagreements, fiery debates, even persecutions. While the Qur'an is the unequivocal primary revelatory source in Islam, the importance of *hadith* in Islamic scholarship as a second revelatory source and a lens that explicates the Qur'an cannot be overemphasized. After all, the companions of Prophet Muhammad (s) had learned their religion from him and had taught it to others, who then taught it to yet others in a seamless chain of teachers from generation to generation over the course of centuries. Therefore, in both daily circumstances and extraordinary situations, the question often was and is: what did the Prophet (s) say and how had he acted? With *hadith*'s central place in Muslim intellectual history, it should not be surprising that the steady development of *hadith* sciences greatly impacted both jurisprudence and Qur'anic sciences. Indeed, scholarly

perspectives on *hadith* continued to be relevant in the modern times and it remains a significant feature of scholarly analyses and communal conversations today. I have tried to capture this scholarly preoccupation with *hadith* in the survey which sometimes takes place in the form of one set of scholars minimizing it while another, in response, is maximizing it.

This survey is organized both chronologically and thematically. In narrating the events as a story, it begins with the death of the Prophet (s) and ends in contemporary times, highlighting and elucidating the various developments as they took place during the intervening 14 centuries. At the same time, when dealing with a thematic topic, related scholars are mentioned in groups spanning several centuries. The article follows the same pattern as an Islamic Studies program, with more time devoted to core disciplines than the various strains in Islamic thought such as theology, philosophy, and mysticism. I hope that the background students learn in this survey will serve as a springboard for more in-depth and critical engagement when studying the sciences and topics individually. Lastly, the intellectual history presented in this article focuses on Sunni scholarship in the central Islamic lands. Considering that compiling a fully exhaustive list of every scholar in each field in the totality of Islamic tradition, even when restricted to Sunnis, is nearly an impossible task, this survey and the timeline only include salient features, trends, figures, and shifts. Moreover, scholars in our intellectual tradition were quite often polymaths who had mastery over multiple sciences and areas of knowledge; it is one of the limitations of this survey that it does not encapsulate their full achievements but only highlights their contribution in one or two spheres.

The survey is accompanied with a visual timeline (see the QR code/link at the end of the article) which may be helpful in locating contemporaneous scholars across disciplines and appreciating the plurality of Islamic thought historically at any given time; it has a key with color-coded categories. Kindly note that the category in which each scholar is highlighted is based on their discussion in the survey (which only captures a small element of the vast and interdisciplinary contributions of these *ʿulama*). The dates until 1000 AH (around the beginning of the 17th century CE) are given as per the *hijri* calendar in both the survey and the timeline while the rest are according to their Gregorian equivalent.[1] All the dates, unless otherwise noted,

signify the years of death. The timeline also provides some dynastic and political context while the map highlights cities across the Muslim world.

Section I: The Regional Schools

The Prophet's mosque in Madina was already the site of study circles (*halaqa*s) during his lifetime, a practice which continued after his demise in 11 AH. These *halaqa*s, which also took place in homes and public spaces, were now led by some of his companions whom people turned to when they had questions. Students eager to learn joined these esteemed personalities and themselves grew into teachers, earning disciples of their own who went on to become scholars,[2] creating a chain of transmission known as "*isnad*"[3] (not to be confused with the *isnad*[4] of a *hadith*,[5] although the narrative concept is similar due to the oral nature of scholarship in early Islam). That is, initially, lessons were orally transmitted from teachers to students who often took notes. As such, memory played a very important role in transfer of *'ilm* (knowledge) between scholars and their disciples; knowledge was embodied by the scholar and could be accessed only through personal interaction. Due to the primitive nature of the Arabic script, written material was not considered authentic unless one had heard it from the author and was given permission to transmit it, creating an uninterrupted *isnad* (chain of transmission) extending from the author to successive generations of students. Even when books became common, the practice of a scholar reciting a text (*sama'*) or having students read it out loud (*qira'a*) continued for many centuries; in this way, teachers would ensure accuracy of student versions of the text which were either copied by hand by the students or bought from professional copyists. In the fifth century AH onwards, the practice of *sama'* was largely overtaken by *ijaza* (permission to transmit) which was issued by the teacher even if a student had only recited part of the book.[6]

In the aftermath of Prophet Muhammad's (s) death, there emerged four regional centers of learning:

- **Makkah**: 'Abdullah ibn 'Abbas (ra) is intimately linked with the Makkan circle. After a series of political appointments, he settled in Makkah where his students benefited from his vast knowledge of

the Qur'an and the earliest recorded exegetical (*tafsir*) efforts took place.[7] Ibn Abbas's (d. 68) disciples, Ikrima (d. 104) and Sa'id ibn Jubayr (d. 95), traveled to other parts of the Muslim world and spread his knowledge. Later renowned teachers of Makkah were Ibn Jurayj (d. 150) and Sufyan ibn ʿUyayna (d. 196).

- **Madina**: An assortment of companions, such as Zayd ibn Thabit (ra), ʿUbayy ibn Kaʿb (ra), ʿA'isha (ra), Abu Hurayra (ra), Umm Salama (ra), and ʿAbdullah ibn ʿUmar (ra), laid the foundation of this school.[8] In contrast with the Makkan school, Qur'anic scribes Ubayy ibn Kaʿb (d. 20) and Zayd ibn Thabit (d. 51) were wary of indulging in or documenting *tafsir* for fear of proliferating flawed opinions or erroneous analyses[9] and instead focused on preservation of the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (s)[10] although reports about circumstances of revelation and meanings of certain words have survived.[11] Incidentally, ʿA'isha (d. 58), Abu Hurayra (d. 58), and ʿAbdullah ibn ʿUmar (d. 73) were among the leading *hadith* transmitters.[12] Their students, from among the *tabi'in* (successors), were called the Seven Sages of Madina and included Saʿid ibn al-Musayyib (d. 94), ʿUrwah ibn al-Zubayr (d. 94), Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr (d. 108), among others. Prominent female scholars were Mu'adha bint ʿAbdallah (d. 83) and ʿAmra bint ʿAbd al-Rahman (d. 106); while both studied with ʿA'isha, the latter also learned from many female companions, such as Umm Salama (d. 64), and was consulted regularly by other *fuqaha'*. In this string of students who eventually became teachers from one generation to another, which also boasted such names as al-Zuhri (d.124) and Hisham ibn ʿUrwa (d. 145), came Malik ibn Anas (d. 179), one of the *tabiʿ tabiʿin* (successor of successors), after whom the Maliki *madhhab* (legal school) came to be known. By this time, the Madinan school had firmly established a traditionalist reputation focused on upholding the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (s) as enshrined in Madinan practice (*ʿamal*).[13] Malik ibn Anas' students included al-Shafiʿi (d. 204), the eponym of the Shafiʿi *madhhab*.
- **Kufa**: Abdullah ibn Masʿud (ra) founded the Kufan center when he was dispatched there by Caliph Umar (ra) and was tasked with fostering Islamic learning in the city. Ibn Masʿud's (d. 32) students were ʿAlqama ibn Qays (d. 62) and ʿAmir al-Shabi (d. 103). ʿAlqama's student Ibrahim al-Nakha'i (d. 96) taught Hammad ibn Abi Sulayman

(d. 120) whose disciple, Abu Hanifa (d. 150), came to be known as the father of the Hanafi *madhhab*. While ʿAmir al-Shabi was a committed traditionalist in line with the Madinan school (known as *Ahl al-Sunnah* or *Ahl al-Hadith*, people of the Prophetic tradition or *athar*), and others who followed his conservative approach included Sulayman al-Aʿmash (d. 148) and Sufyan al-Thawri (d. 161),[14] Ibrahim al-Nakha'i adopted a dialectical methodology which was refined over the next generations of scholars that were influenced by him; these scholars came to be called *Ahl al-Ra'y* (people of legal reasoning) because they were more interested in drawing jurisprudential conclusions through analogy and analysis than simply preserving Prophetic *Sunnah*.[15] There was constant tension between the adherents of *Ahl al-Hadith* and *Ahl al-Ra'y*, with the latter being considered a deviant form of scholarship by the mainstream traditionalists. Nonetheless, Abu Hanifa and his students, Abu Yusuf (d. 182) and al-Shaybani (d. 189), mastered the art of *ra'y*.

- **Basra**: The female companion, Nusayba bint al-Harith (ra), relocated to Basra from Madina and taught there until she died in 22 AH. Anas ibn Malik (ra), one of the leading transmitters of *hadith*, also settled in Basra, a garrison town, in his old age. He taught Muhammad ibn Sirin (d. 110), Hafsa bint Sirin (d. ca. 100), and al-Hasan al-Basri (d. 110). Al-Hasan al-Basri had grown up in Madina where he received his early Islamic education and met many companions, such as Anas ibn Malik (d. 90). Al-Hasan was well-known for his inspiring sermons and constantly sought to instill a spiritual awareness in people, reminding them of the transient nature of earthly life, our ultimate purpose as revealed by God, and the reality of the hereafter.[16] Another ascetic figure, Rabiʿa al-ʿAdawiyya (d. 185), was Basran and is renowned for her piety and renunciation of worldly pleasures. As such, the Basran school came to be seen as the precursor of later Sufi movements.

The above descriptions, however, do not adequately capture the interactions between the scholars of different centers. For example, the student of Ibn Abbas, Saʿid al-Jubayr, also studied with ʿA'isha and Ibn ʿUmar in Madina and later moved to Kufa where he shared his wealth of knowledge with students of his own, returning to Makkah in his last years.[17] Once the companion Abu al-Darda (ra, d. 32) joined his official post in Damascus

during the caliphate of ʿUthman (d. 35), he established a Qur'an study circle, thereby initiating the Damascus school. His wife, Umm al-Darda (d. 81), was also a respected scholar in Damascus whose classes were attended by the Caliph Abd al-Malik al-Marwan (r. 65-86).[18] Al-Awzaʿi (d. 157) was a *hadith* scholar based in Syria too. When al-Zuhri, the famous Madinan successor who was renowned for his memory and transmission of *hadith*s, relocated to Damascus, his precious knowledge proliferated there.[19] The slave Maʿmar ibn Rashid (d. 153) became his student and when Maʿmar later moved to Yemen, Abdul Razzaq al-Sinani (d. 211) came under his tutelage and he inscribed Maʿmar's lectures in book form, thereby preserving the knowledge Maʿmar had gained from al-Zuhri and his other teachers.[20] According to some reports, it was the Abbasid Caliph al-Mansur (r. 136-158) who asked Malik ibn Anas to record the normative tradition of Madina which he did in the form of *al-Muwatta*,[21] relying extensively on the reports he had learned from al-Zuhri.[22] Al-Mansur also requested several Madinan scholars to travel to Baghdad to teach *hadith* to Abu Yusuf and other students of Abu Hanifa; likewise, the Kufan al-Shaybani was a student of Malik ibn Anas.[23] Al-Shafiʿi himself arrived in Baghdad as a disciple of Malik ibn Anas and debated al-Shaybani. Ahmad ibn Hanbal (d. 241), who was quickly being recognized as a master of *hadith* and would go on to be the force behind the Hanbali *madhhab*, was grateful for al-Shafiʿi's eloquence and felt that finally someone had both the knowledge and quick-wittedness to challenge the *Ahl al-Ra'y*.[24] It is reported that al-Shafiʿi learned *hadith* from Ibn Hanbal while teaching him jurisprudence.[25] When al-Shafiʿi went to Egypt, he studied under Nafisa bint al-Hasan (d. 208), the great-great-granddaughter of the Prophet (s).[26] As evident from the few names mentioned above, there was lively participation of female companions and successors in the scholarly circles. Women, just like men, enthusiastically shared the knowledge they had heard from their Prophet (s) with people flocking to them to listen and learn from them; some of the female students then became instructors themselves. Their teaching, however, was not restricted to *hadith* transmission only but included as well legal interpretations of reports meant to inculcate proper practice of Islam.[27] Their reports were also routinely accepted in reaching legal rulings by their male counterparts.[28] Moreover, the earliest and still functioning institution of learning,

al-Qarawiyyin University in Fez, Morocco, was founded by a female philanthropist, Fatima al-Fihri (d. 266), in 245 AH.

Section 2: The Civil Wars

At this point, we must acknowledge certain stark ground realities that scholars and the Muslim community as a whole had to grapple with. The first *fitna* (great trial; also known as civil war), which lasted from 35 to 40 AH, started from the rebellion against Caliph ʿUthman, continued through the caliphate of ʿAli (ra), and culminated in Muʿawiyyah (ra), the governor of Syria, establishing himself as the Caliph of the *ummah* (the entire global community of Muslims). Unrest was again triggered after Muʿawiyyah (d. 60) named his son, Yazid (d. 64), to the throne, initiating dynastic rule contrary to the custom of *shura* (consultation) established by the previous caliphs. It propelled al-Husayn (ra), the son of ʿAli (d. 40) and the grandson of the Prophet (s), to reject this succession and resulted in the massacre at Karbala by Yazid's army and the beheading of al-Husayn (d. 61). Various other rebellions against governors also took place during and after the caliphate of Yazid, including the siege of Makkah after ʿAbdullah ibn Zubayr (ra) declared his caliphate. This second *fitna* ended in 73 AH after the Umayyads emerged as the victors with the martyrdom of Ibn Zubayr.[29]

The Kharijis were political rebels who separated from ʿAli's army in the Battle of Siffin (37 AH) and became an extremist fringe group. The Kharijis upheld the Qur'an as the sole guidance to be interpreted individually and without context, rejecting the authority of the *Sunnah*.[30] They not only assassinated ʿAli but also reared their heads in the second *fitna*, causing sectarian divides. The *ʿulama* were predominantly pro-ʿAli but acquiesced to the Umayyad rule in the interest of unity, particularly against the Khariji attacks and incursions.[31] Dismissing Umayyad *Qadari* claims[32] that implied fatalism, i.e., that their victory over ʿAli was destined by God, scholars mostly practiced *irjaʿ* (suspension of judgement) and relegated to God the decision of who was right between the companions.[33] Yet, this did not mean that the relationship between the scholars and the ruling elite was fully peaceful. In fact, many *fuqaha'* participated in the rebellions during the second *fitna* and paid the price for it by being

executed, imprisoned, or going into hiding. Others were able to pacify the politicians and win their freedom.[34] Overall, the Umayyads were not universally opposed by the scholars, nor did they indiscriminately assail the scholarly class for their pro-ʿAli sentiments: "The scholars as well as the rulers could tolerate a range of opinions and attitudes."[35] Notable among the Umayyad rulers was ʿUmar ibn ʿAbd al-Aziz (r. 99-101) whose enthusiastic support for traditionalist scholarly pursuits and encouragement for the preservation of the *Sunnah* resulted in the formation of *sirah* (biography) of the Prophet (s) as a field of knowledge, something discouraged by previous Umayyad caliphs.[36] Ibn Ishaq (d. 151) is well-known as the author of an early *sirah* text.

The third *fitna* took place between 126 and 132 AH due to inter-Umayyad civil wars and the simmering discontent against the ruling Marwanid family of the Umayyads turning into a concerted effort to oust them largely in the name of ʿAli and his family. Known as the Abbasids, titled after the clan of the Prophet's (s) uncle, al-ʿAbbas (ra), they defeated the Umayyads in 132 AH and installed a *khalifa* (caliph) who, contrary to the original claims, was not from the descendants of ʿAli, thereby angering them.[37] Hence, the partisans (*shiʿa*) of ʿAli splintered from the collective piety-minded coalition who had helped bring the Abbasids to power, while those who accepted their rule with the hope of unifying the *ummah* formed the *Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamaʿah* (those who adhere to the *Sunnah* and unite upon it).[38] Until this time, there hadn't been a formal Shiʿa-Sunni differentiation among the early scholars, many of whom had shared pro-ʿAli sentiments along with a general reverence for all the *khulafa-e-rashidun* (the rightly-guided caliphs).[39] While the Sunnis vested their religious authority in the *'ulama'*, the Shiʿa saw the family of the Prophet (s) as the vessel of continued esoteric knowledge and conferred special status on their descendants, calling them *imam*s (leaders).[40] Over time, the Shiʿa Muslims further branched into several sects, with the Imami or Twelver Shiʿas forming the majority along with smaller groups such as the Ismaʿilis and the Zaydis. The bulk of the Shiʿa came to believe that the following 12 imams were divinely directed members of the Prophet's family and held the authority to interpret the Qur'an and *Sunnah*: ʿAli, al-Hasan (d. 50), al-Husayn, ʿAli Zayn al-ʿAbideen (d.

94), Muhammad al-Baqir (d. 114), Jaʿfar al-Sadiq (d. 147), Musa al-Kazim (d. 183), ʿAli al-Rida (d. 203), Muhammad al-Taqi (d. 220), ʿAli al-Naqi (d. 254), al-Hasan al-ʿAskari (d. 260), and Muhammad al-Mahdi (the Hidden Imam).[41] In addition, prominent Shiʿa scholars over the centuries have included Hakima bint al-Iman al-Jawad (d. 274), Kashshi (d. 339), Ibn Babawayh (d. 380), Shaykh al-Mufid (d. 413), al-Tusi (d. 458), Jamal al-Din ibn Tawus (d. 673), al-Shahid at-Thani (d. 965), Muhammad Sadr ad-Din al-Shirazi (d. 1640), and Fatemeh Kashani (d. 1702).

Section 3: *Hadith* Scholarship

The politically tumultuous situation impacted the *ʿulama* in numerous ways. Aside from the tricky predicament of choosing sides, defining their own stances, and explicating the religious ramifications of Umayyad actions as mentioned above, they had to constantly strive to affirm the authority of the Prophet (s) and preserve his *Sunnah*. This became an urgent matter in the face of Khariji and later Mu'tazili (see below) emphasis on the uncontested legitimacy of the Qur'an alone.[42] Due to competing political interests and the various sides vying for influence, there was also an upsurge in fabricated traditions attributed to the Prophet (s) in the aftermath of the second *fitna*.[43] The Qur'an had become fixed during the caliphate of 'Uthman[44] but *hadith* proved to be a far more fluid terrain because, unlike the Qur'an, the Prophet (s) discouraged the writing of *hadith* as he did not want his words to be mistakenly conflated with the Qur'an.[45] Just as *hadith* was used to advance political and sectarian agendas,[46] so was Qur'anic exegesis[47] and the task fell to the *ʿulama* to maintain the authenticity of the former and uphold the correct interpretation of the latter. As such, beginning in the late Umayyad and early Abbasid period, a "self-aware scholarly and educated class (*al-khassa*) appeared which began distinguishing itself from the masses (*al-ʿamma*)."[48]

The companions would often simply say, "The Prophet (s) said…" without identifying who they heard his words from.[49] After all, there were other companions to verify them; we see this in the many corrections 'A'isha made of prophetic reports, for instance.[50] However, after their passing, there began appearing forged reports that were highly

political and contentious in nature, mirroring the unfolding of tumultuous events described above.[51] In order to sift through and find reliable *hadith*s, *'ulama* started asking, "Whom did you hear it from?" *Hadith* collectors began traveling from city to city to gather and record *hadith*s, tracing their full *isnad*s.[52] 'Abdullah ibn Mubarak (d. 181),[53] a famous *hadith* collector and critic, reportedly said, "The *isnad* is part of religion, if not for the *isnad*, whoever wanted could say whatever they wanted."[54] Notably, women were not known for narrating any fabricated *hadith*s.[55] However, the increasing "professionalization" of *hadith* transmission, marked by demanding journeys (*rihla*s) and stringent criteria for verification of narrators, became unsuitable for female participation in this endeavor, leading to an overall decline in their *hadith* activity for the next two and a half centuries.[56] While traditionalists and *hadith* scholars began focusing on scrutinizing *hadith* literature, the Kufan scholar Abu Hanifa, like his predecessors, preferred to rely only on well-known *hadith*s and his own legal reasoning (*ra'y*).[57] It was his way of inoculating his responses and decisions from fraudulent *hadith*s. His students, Abu Yusuf and al-Shaybani, followed suit. Even though the traditionalists saw their approach as radical and lax, the Abbasids began favoring all sorts of erudite activities, such as *ra'y* and *kalam* (rational theology), as the nascent Muslim empire suddenly found itself in a considerably advanced intellectual milieu in its conquered lands.[58]

Meanwhile, al-Shafi'i traveled from Makkah to Madina to study under the towering scholarship of the traditionalist Malik ibn Anas, who had compiled *al-Muwatta*, containing *hadith*s, sayings of the companions, and opinions of early scholars, including himself.[59] Instead of the general practice of students copying notes based on their teacher's judgements and justifications which would then be collected and made available as *Masa'il*, Malik captured the "full range of discrete topics in a deliberate and systematic arrangement" in one volume which was divided by chapters.[60] Indicative of the intimate connection between the development of the *hadith* and *fiqh* disciplines, *al-Muwatta* essentially was the "first compendium of Islamic law" and the first "book of *hadith* organized according to subject matter."[61] Yet, it also represented how Islam was originally practiced as the living, non-textual *Sunnah* of the

Prophet (s), the companions, and other authoritative figures until Malik's time. As such, Malik held the *ʿamal* (practice) of Madina in great esteem – so much so that he believed it was a better measure for identifying Islamic legal parameters than the textual *hadith*s – and felt that the "way things are done here" should be replicated everywhere else as Islam spread.[62] Al-Shafiʿi had obtained a copy of *al-Muwatta* and memorized it before arriving in Madina, where he stayed under Malik's tutelage most likely until his teacher's death.[63] In 184 AH, al-Shafiʿi journeyed to Baghdad, the newly founded capital of the Abbasids. Here, he encountered both *Ahl al-Raʾy* as well as theologians (*mutakallimun*, those who practiced *kalam*) and his engagements with both had a profound impact on the development of his own ideas. Al-Shafiʿi criticized the theologians for demanding certainty and prioritizing consensus to the exclusion of differences of opinion, recognizing that law was the proper vehicle to accommodate diversity and plurality through interpretive methods.[64] On the other hand, he experienced firsthand the dialectic power of *raʾy* but was dismayed when its proponents would at times ignore authenticated *hadith*s in favor of their reasoning.[65] He realized that they represented the localized Kufan legal approach, just as Malik rooted his legal thought in the *ʿamal* of the Madinan people.[66] Instead of locating the normativity of a *hadith* in a particular place, such as Kufa or Madina, al-Shafiʿi would argue that the soundness of its *isnad* should determine normativity.[67] This view paralleled the efforts of *hadith* collectors who were willing to undertake great journeys and were bringing new verified reports with full *isnad*s to the fore.[68] This concern with authenticity is also evident at this time in the related science of history which was initially known as *Maghazi* (Expeditions of the Prophet (s))[69] and later called *sirah*. *Al-Maghazi* by al-Waqidi (d. 207) displays this concern because, unlike Ibn Ishaq, he meticulously lists his sources and strives to corroborate them, which is likewise seen in the efforts of Ibn Hisham (d. 218) who revised Ibn Ishaq's *sirah* to rid it of unverified content. Aban (d. 105), the son of ʿUthman ibn ʿAffan, was one of the pioneers in this field. A later subgenre of historical scholarship was the *Shamaʾil* (prophetic virtues and characteristics); one of these books was written by Qadi ʿIyad (d. 544). Another subgenre focused on proofs that illustrated the prophetic

standing of Muhammad (s); two renowned authors of this type of books were al-Hakim al-Nishapuri (d. 405) and his student, al-Bayhaqi (d. 458).

To al-Shafiʿi, coming into his own as a scholar, the regional traditions of Abu Hanifa and Malik did not seem viable for the ever-growing Muslim society. As shown by El Shamsy, the state of affairs in Egypt, where al-Shafiʿi spent his last years and revised his *ar-Risala* (*The Message*), was a case in point. Egypt's Arab elites, descendants of the original conquerors, enjoyed a high status and came to represent a communal normative culture, a "distinctly Egyptian form of Malikism";[70] they were also economically superior, since they received a state pension in return for continuing service in the militia.[71] This meant that Arab genealogy was paramount and even conversion to Islam did not afford many opportunities to (the non-Arab) locals unless they were able to establish clientage with an Arab.[72] At the turn of the century, this neat social hierarchy was increasingly being threatened as non-Arabs began to increase and learned alternate ways to ascend to powerful political and intellectual positions.[73] Moreover, Abbasid centralizing efforts wrested control of key communal affairs from the Egyptian Arab elites, including the judiciary, which had traditionally been locally sourced; the Abbasid appointment of a Hanafi judge was seen as an affront by the Maliki Egyptians. The Abbasids dispatched their own troops to bring order in Egypt, thereby eliminating the need for their pension and subsequently discontinuing it. This situation in Egypt further confirmed for al-Shafiʿi that the old order was dying and that a new approach which was grounded in textual (not communal) normativity was the need of the hour.[74] Therefore, he proposed a system which foregrounded the Qur'an and the authentically transmitted *Sunnah* as revelatory sources[75] followed by consensus (*ijmaʿ*) and *qiyas* (analogical reasoning). In doing so, he affirmed the traditionalist partiality for *hadith* while also creating room for controlled *ra'y*. This synthesis of the warring factions of *'ulama* proved to be revolutionary and came to be accepted in time by all four emerging legal schools (*madhahib*),[76] making al-Shafiʿi the father of *usul al-fiqh* (legal theory).[77] Furthermore, by moving away from communal tradition and instead centering communal interpretation, al-Shafiʿi also shifted focus from Arab genealogy to the Arabic language itself, something which could be learned and mastered, thereby leveling the "playing field between Arabs and non-Arabs."[78] At the

same time, al-Shafiʿi paved the way for the scholarly class (*al-khassa*) as not only the guardians of tradition but also its interpreters, separate from the majority of people (*al-ʿamma*) who drew on prophetic tradition for largely charismatic reasons.[79]

Section 4: Formation of Legal Schools

In the mean time, Ahmad ibn Hanbal solidified his position as a traditionalist in Baghdad, focusing on promoting *hadith* and, unlike al-Shafiʿi, minimally relying on *qiyas*.[80] He was known for his mild asceticism, impeccable character, and rejection of any government employment.[81] On the other hand, Abbasids gravitated towards the *Ahl al-Ra'y* ,who served as court-appointed *qadis* (judges), unlike their teacher Abu Hanifa, who had refused to do so. The intellectual-minded Abbasids, who inaugurated the House of Wisdom in 214 AH,[82] were also increasingly drawn to the *mutakallimun* and their rational theology. The traditionalists, including Ahmad ibn Hanbal, were quite critical of *kalam* due to its advocates' extra-revelatory contention that one's intellect alone was capable of arriving at universal truths (such as the existence of God).[83] The Muʿtazilis[84] in Iraq debated Christians in the name of defending Islam using the cosmological argument[85] which goes back to Plato and Aristotle, finding a common language between Muslims and non-Muslims. In rationally upholding God's eternal and everlasting presence, though, they ended up denying core Qur'anic concepts, such as the attributes of God and His Book's timeless existence. The Muʿtazilis, influenced by their engagement with Christian theologians and Hellenistic ideas, insisted on the createdness of the Qur'an, in order to distinguish it from the exclusivity of God, which not only implied that its interpretation could be metaphorical and temporal but also diminished the authoritativeness of Prophetic *hadith* as a means of understanding the Qur'an. The traditionalists, in contrast, persisted in asserting the uncreatedness of the Qur'an along with *hadith* as a revelatory source which indicated and clarified the meaning of the Qur'an.[86] These two strands in Islamic thought co-existed despite palpable tensions, each side disparaging the other, until Caliph Ma'mun (r. 198-218) stepped in and made createdness

of the Qur'an the official Abbasid stance, vowing to persecute anyone who opposed it, thereby launching the *mihna* (inquisition), which lasted from 218 AH through 234 AH; it was endorsed by subsequent *khalifa*s until it was reversed by Caliph Mutawakkil (r. 232-247).

As a result of the *mihna*, many traditionalists, including followers of Malik and al-Shafiʿi, were mistreated, imprisoned, tortured, even executed. Along with the *mutakallimun*, the court-appointed Hanafis oversaw this persecution, further widening the rift between the *Ahl al-Hadith* and *Ahl al-Ra'y*.[87] Ahmad ibn Hanbal was also imprisoned, interrogated, and flogged for refusing to accept the establishment's stance. Even when he was released from prison, he continued to be harassed by the authorities and often lived in hiding for fear of further reprisal.[88] Regardless, he refused to shift from his principled stand, despite knowing the price he had to pay for it; this added to his already exceptional reputation, making him the face of the traditionalist opposition. When the *mihna* was officially discontinued, it signaled the traditionalists' victory over the ruling elite, signifying that the authority to define orthodoxy rested with the *'ulama*, not the caliph.[89] During this time, the traditionalists had gained much popular support too. However, this triumph was bittersweet because there was a distinct sense of loss, not only for the scholars that had died from torture but for those who had caved during the inquisition and tarnished their reputations. Ahmad ibn Hanbal emerged as the "unquestioned moral leader" of the traditionalists and he took a very stern approach towards these scholars.[90] The traditionalists began to purge their camp of Sunni *mutakallimun*[91] as well, with *lafz al-Qur'an* becoming a defining issue. This concept referred to the createdness of the "physical sound of the [Qur'an] being recited or its written form on a page," and was accepted by some traditionalists and Sunni rationalists, although the most conservative voices among the traditionalists considered even this opinion to be heretical.[92] Ahmad ibn Hanbal, and his most ardent followers after his death, claimed that anyone advocating *lafz al-Qur'an* as created was a *Jahmi*, thereby delegitimizing the position itself.[93] Therefore, the aftermath of the *mihna* deepened divisions among the traditionalists, which explains the eventual formation of the Hanbali *madhhab* as distinct from the

Shafiʿi one (even though their scholarly networks had been interlinked). The Shafiʿis were more tolerant of Sunni *mutakallimun*; this is reflected in the *madhhab*'s evolution, where traditionalists and rationalists have co-existed whereas the Hanbali school's trajectory has been mostly uniformly traditionalist.[94] The Muʿtazilis declined and eventually lost all credibility among the Sunnis and assimilated into Shiʿa theology around the fifth *hijri* century.[95]

Up until now, we have seen the fundamental role the prophetic *Sunnah* has played in the fostering of initial Islamic legal thought and how approaches towards both became sophisticated due to cross-breeding of ideas through scholarly engagement. The fields of *hadith* and *fiqh* (jurisprudence) are thus interdependent; it is no coincidence that jurists such as Malik ibn Anas and Ahmad ibn Hanbal were the *hadith* giants of their time as well. By the third century, the earlier zeal for *hadith* collection had led to a three-tiered *hadith* criticism method: "demanding a source (*isnad*) … evaluating the reliability of that source, and … seeking corroboration for the hadith."[96] The *faqih* (jurist) relied on the authenticity of *hadith*, whether as proven over time in communal practice (like Malik ibn Anas or Abu Hanifa) or through collection and criticism of reports (like al-Shafiʿi and Ahmad ibn Hanbal). As such, although *hadith* and *fiqh* eventually developed into distinct disciplines, they share an intimately connected history. Moreover, although the eponyms of legal schools developed their methodologies in their lifetimes, much of the work in terms of transmitting and refining their wealth of knowledge, including the formalization of each as a legal school, took place by their respective circle of students spanning generations, who preserved their teachers' works, produced texts of their own explicating their teachers' approaches, and extended them with new cases, at times adopting strategies from a rival camp. For instance, just as al-Shafiʿi had accepted legal reasoning, we see the *Ahl al-Ra'y* integrating *hadith* sciences into jurisprudence in the third century, with the Hanafi jurist al-Thalji (d. 267) grounding his school's legal methodology in *hadith* and recasting legal reasoning accordingly.[97] In addition, subsequent generations of Hanbali scholars relied more on *qiyas* than their founding father. Individual Maliki jurists were also impacted by al-Shafiʿi's methods, whereas Egypt

eventually adopted the Shafiʿi *madhhab*. Al-Shafiʿi's students spread his ideas far and wide, which led to these convergences across *madhahib*;[98] the task of scholars became easier with the availability of paper, causing a "knowledge explosion" in third and fourth centuries AH.[99]

The growing dependency on *hadith* led collectors to begin synthesizing reports, thereby initiating the *sahih* (authentic) movement in the third century and the production of definitive volumes of *hadith*. The foremost of these were by al-Bukhari (d. 256) and Muslim (d. 261), followed by their disciples and peers, Ibn Majah (d. 272), Abu Dawud (d. 275), Tirmidhi (d. 278), and Nasa'i (d. 302), all interacting in the vibrant traditionalist Baghdad scene which also included Shafiʿi scholars along with Ibn Hanbal and his circle.[100] They were motivated by the sentiment that there were now enough authenticated *hadith*s that scholars need not rely on weak ones in determining legal and doctrinal issues.[101] Seen initially as deviating from the norm of transmission-based *ʿulama*, who nonetheless relied on reports with problematic *isnad*s to reach legal decisions, the collections of al-Bukhari and Muslim were later studied and promoted by Shafiʿi scholars, eventually leading to their widespread recognition by all the legal schools in the fifth century.[102] This was yet another step in solidifying the elite (*al-khassa*) position of scholars from the masses (*al-ʿamma*), for whom their "amateur hadith collection was a means of tying themselves to their Prophet." With the success of the *sahih* movement, the authenticated compilations superseded personal compendia.[103]

An important consequence of the standardization of *hadith* collections was the resurgence in women scholarship in this arena in the late fourth century.[104] While the early female transmitters "represent the localized reproduction of religious knowledge," which eventually became obsolete in the zeal for *hadith* collection from all and sundry, the consolidation of *hadith* tradition in written texts gave women a more stabilized environment to contribute to this field once again.[105] Daughters usually learned *hadith* from their mothers, fathers, grandparents, and other family members, including husbands; early examples of fathers teaching their daughters are Saʿid ibn al-Musayyib's daughter who learned *hadith*s from him and Malik ibn Anas's daughter who

memorized *al-Muwatta*; this became increasingly common and contributed to the revival of female scholarship.[106] In Baghdad, Amat al-Wahid (d. 377) memorized the Qur'an, learned Shafiʿi fiqh, and narrated from her father while Amat al-Salam (d. 390), under her father's guidance, became a *hadith* scholar.[107] For the most part, women's scholarship was focused on gaining expertise in *hadith*, which they then taught to both male and female students. Karima al-Marwaziyya (d. 463) in Makkah became a celebrated transmitter of *Sahih al-Bukhari*.[108] Fatima al-Juzdaniyya (d. 514) was renowned for her narration of al-Tabarani's (d. 360) collections. Fatima b. Saʿd al-Khayr (d. 600) had the opportunity to learn from al-Juzdaniyya in Isfahan; she later settled in Egypt where there was much proliferation of *hadith* study.[109] In Baghdad, Shuhda al-Katiba (d. 574) and Tajanni al-Wahbaniyya (d. 575) were considered major *hadith* scholars; Shuhda was also a master calligrapher.[110] Fatima al-Samarqandiyya (d. 578), on the other hand, was known for her legal acumen; her father, a scholar, married her to his faithful student, al-Kasani (d. 587), who became a famous jurist himself.[111]

The process of transmitting and collecting *hadith*s continued after the *sahih* movement, but during the fifth *hijri* century the *hadith* scholars began accepting the fact that recording *hadith*s in circulation was coming to an end.[112] Focus shifted to explication of existing *hadith* collections which led to the development of the *hadith* commentary (*sharh al-hadith*) genre over time. Similar to Qur'anic *tafsir* (see below), the *shuruh* (commentaries) became an interdisciplinary site where the commentator relied on multiple sources of information (lexicology, legal precepts, scriptural verses, rationalist hermeneutics, history, and more) to advance a certain interpretation; at the same time, the *hadith* commentators also deployed more specialized methodologies such as biographies of the transmitters, knowledge of various narrations of the *hadith*s, and analyses of the compilers' editorial choices.[113] Early commentaries addressed popular *hadith*s, obscure vocabulary, problematic *isnad*, and ambiguity in meaning. Examples include al-Khattabi's (d. 388) *shuruh* of *Sunan Abi Dawud* and *Sahih al-Bukhari*; Ibn Abd al-Barr's (d. 463) commentary of Malik's *al-Muwatta*, and al-Mazari's (d. 536) *sharh* of *Sahih Muslim*.[114] Subsequent *hadith* commentaries were more encyclopedic, with detailed analyses of

each *hadith* along with explanation of their *isnad*s and their organization according to headings. The *sharh* of *Sahih Muslim* by al-Nawawi (d. 676) and the famous commentary of *Sahih al-Bukhari*, *Fath al-Bari*, by Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (d. 852) fall in this category.[115] Shorter commentaries also appeared and were more accessible for general readers, such as al-Zarkashi's (d. 794) concise *sharh* of *Sahih al-Bukhari* and al-Haytami's (d. 974) commentary of al-Nawawi's renowned forty *hadith* collection.[116] Writing commentaries became a hallmark of reputable *hadith* scholars, an undertaking that enabled them to interact with the *hadith* tradition;[117] notable *shuruh* in the later period are by Ali Qari (d. 1606) of Makkah, al-Sindi (d. 1728) of Yemen, and the Indian al-Mubarakpuri (d. 1935). Topical *hadith* collections with editorial annotations also became commonplace; for instance, jurists such as al-Ishbili (d. 581), al-Maqdisi (d. 600), and Ibn Daqiq al-ʿId (d. 702) devoted themselves to examining legal rulings in *hadith*s and discussing them in detail as part of the *ahkam al-hadith* (laws derived from *hadith*) genre.[118] *Takhrij* was another genre that appeared in the seventh century AH onwards, which reviewed all the *hadith*s that had appeared in a previous scholarly work and discussed their reliability.[119] Scholars who undertook such efforts included al-Mundhiri (d. 656), Ibn al-Mulaqqin (d. 804), Zayn al-Din al-ʿIraqi (d. 806), and Shams al-Din al-Sakhawi (d. 902).

The prior acknowledgement of a shared methodology, forming the first principles of *usul al-fiqh*, followed by the approval of a shared body of *hadith*, provided not only a mutually agreed-upon worldview but also a common language across *madhahib* which was then used for inter-*madhhab* debates and polemics,[120] each school solidifying its identity and entrenching its own positions over centuries.[121] Yet, inter-*madhhab* scholarly engagement did occur and often led to hybridization of ideas and influence, just as it did with the regional centers in the early decades of Islamic scholarship. For example, Sufyan al-Thawri had been educated in Kufa but adopted the exegetical approach of Ibn ʿAbbas.[122] Likewise, al-Hasan al-Basri was influenced by the Madinan Saʿid ibn al- Musayyib.[123] We continue to see this intermingling with al-Shafiʿi, who started out as a disciple of Malik ibn Anas but later evolved his own intellectual project. At times, the interaction did not necessarily lead to change of

affiliation. Muhammad ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam (d. 268), an Egyptian Maliki, was a student of al-Shafiʿi; despite being influenced by his teacher, he returned to formally practicing Malikism.[124] On the contrary, al-Buwayti (d. 231) and al-Muzani (d. 264), two key students of al-Shafiʿi, embraced their teacher's methods and left their earlier respective Maliki and Hanafi associations; in doing so, their particular approach represented the co-mingling of ideas across schools.[125] The compilers of the *sahih* books were part of the diverse traditionalist network in Baghdad. For instance, both al-Bukhari and Muslim were students of Ibn Hanbal but did not like his flexibility in using weak *hadith* (which he preferred to *qiyas*, such was his traditionalist resolve),[126] propelling them to identify and collect *sahih hadith*s only, a telling sign of their Shafiʿi teachers' impression on them. Moreover, al-Tahawi (d. 321), who started out within the Shafiʿi circle, later switched to Hanafism. Incidentally, al-Tahawi's *al-Aqidah al-Tahawiyah* has become the defining document explicating the basic traditionalist creed, irrespective of one's *madhhab*; it represents the effects of al-Shafiʿi's ideas through his heavy reliance on *hadith* as evidentiary support.[127] Likewise, al-Ashʿari (d. 324) started out as a disciple of Muʿtazilis in Basra but eventually abandoned that school in favor of the Sunni worldview; in defending the latter, however, he employed rationalist techniques, thereby founding the Ashʿari theological school and converging some of the Muʿtazili ideas as well as certain forms of theological reasoning itself into mainstream Islam (see Section 6).[128]

Section 5: Qur'anic Exegesis

The development of early Qur'anic *tafsir* (exegesis) was an integral part of *hadith* and, hence, orally transmitted.[129] After all, the Prophet (s) was the very first exegete (*mufassir*) and his words together with circumstances of revelation (*asbab al-nuzul*) have reached us through reports by his companions.[130] ʿAbdullah ibn ʿAbbas was considered to be the companion with the foremost knowledge of the Qur'an; as outlined earlier, he, along with ʿAbdullah ibn Mas'ud and Ubayy ibn Kaʿb, et al., headed the initial regional schools. Despite being in different cities, their views were remarkably similar. This can be seen in their unanimous refusal to

speculate about the *mutashabbihat* (ambiguous verses) as well as their *bila kayf* (without asking how) acceptance of God's attributes.[131] These teacher-companions employed their exceptional linguistic skills to explicate Qur'anic Arabic but often consulted other companions about meanings of arcane words.[132] They greatly influenced the exegetical views of their disciples who continued their work. In addition to lexical explanations, their primary exegetical techniques were *tafsir al-qur'an bil-qur'an* (exegesis of the Qur'an from the Qur'an),[133] *bil-sunnah* (from the Prophetic *Sunnah*), and *bi aqwal al-sahabah* (from the sayings of the companions). Early *tafsir* activity was unstructured, partial, and synoptic,[134] largely for the purposes of instruction in *halaqa*s alongside answering people's questions. It stayed this way through the generation of the successors (*tabi'in*). The *tabi' tabi'in* (successors of successors), on the other hand, approached *tafsir* in a holistic manner, encompassing the entire Qur'an according to its chapter arrangement.[135] The very first scholar to provide a verse-by-verse commentary of the Qur'an was Muqatil ibn Sulayman (d. 150).[136]

The Qur'an was the first book of Islam as well as Arabic literature.[137] The study of Qur'an, as evident through grammatical terminologies used in the earliest commentaries, led to the creation of the science of grammar.[138] Caliph ʿAli reportedly assigned his secretary, Abu'l Aswad al-Du'ali (d. 69), to record the basics of Arabic grammar in order to safeguard the language from corruption.[139] Other grammarians followed, such as ʿAbdallah ibn Abi Ishaq (d. 117) and al-Kisa'i (d. 189), primarily in Kufa and Basra, but al-Sibawayhi (d. 180) is credited with writing the ultimate reference book of Arabic grammar in the classical period.[140] The grammarians developed very sophisticated techniques that became vital to the understanding of Qur'an. Lexicology and grammar were so central to early *tafsir* activities that exegeses were often lexical glosses.[141] Thus, philology was a crucial hermeneutical tool utilized by classical exegetes. It not only analyzed root words but also placed them in their pre-Islamic historic and linguistic contexts, probing the grammatical structure of verses and comparing usages of the same or similar terms across different verses.[142] Nonetheless, *mufassir*s skillfully used their linguistic acumen and interdisciplinary sources to bolster the overarching orthodox Qur'anic narrative. As such, exegetes did not deploy linguistic

analysis in an unrestricted way; rather, they tempered it by the larger objective of reinforcing the revelatory sources.[143]

Yet, Qur'an and *hadith* remained interdependent as prophetic reports continued to be employed as an exegetical tool. As such, the *tafsir* efforts of this initial time reflect the overall scholarly milieu as we have seen with *hadith* and *fiqh*, complete with inclusion of forged *hadith*s, lack of *isnad* in reports, unattributed opinions, and the deployment of sectarian and political agendas.[144] Furthermore, the development of *tafsir* was unique because, unlike jurists, exegetes routinely utilized pagan literary references as well as Judeo-Christian anecdotes (*isra'iliyyat*) in explicating Qur'anic verses and themes.[145] This distinguishes the discipline from *fiqh* in an important way: since the Qur'anic content goes far beyond legal or dogmatic issues, exegetes relied on a variety of sources and were far more flexible than their stringent juristic counterparts.[146] It also explains the presence of weak traditions in many *hadith* collections: in matters concerning morality and spirituality, scholars have been quite lenient in accepting reports even though they may have problematic *isnad*s.[147]

Through *tafsir*, scholars also historicized the Qur'an using the *sirah* of Prophet Muhammad (s). This contextualization not only grounded the text in daily communal Muslim life but also facilitated the deduction of legal and moral guidance.[148] At the same time, some *tafasir* (commentaries), especially those associated with mystical and theological hermeneutics, focused predominantly on symbolic and allegorical interpretations rather than historical readings of the text;[149] this can be seen in the works of the Sufi al-Qushayri (d. 465), the Muʿtazili al-Zamakhshari (d. 538), and the theologian-philosopher Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (d. 606). ʻ*Ulum al-Qur'an* distinguishes between the two familiar strands of *tafsir bil-ma'thur* (exegesis based on tradition or *athar*) and *tafsir bil-ra'y* (exegesis based on personal reasoning), the former being the traditionalist Sunni view that values exoteric (apparent) meaning and the latter encompassing theological and other groups that prefer esoteric (metaphorical) interpretation.[150] However, *mufassir*s utilize interdisciplinary resources which are difficult to categorize in such binary classifications. For example, the *tafsir* of al-Thaʿlabi (d. 425), who hailed from the fourth *hijri* century intellectual center of Nishapur, contains an abundance of pagan

literary references and yet maintains the Sunni worldview.[151] In addition, the genealogical tradition is an important feature of Qur'anic exegesis: each new exegete would first cite the interpretations of the previous *mufassir*s and then add his own views. This ensured continuity as well as inclusion of a plurality of interpretations.[152] Hence, al-Qurtubi (d. 671), whose commentary is generally considered to be *tafsir bil-ma'thur*, drew from, among others, al-Zamakhshari, who is usually associated with *tafsir bil-ra'y*.[153] Therefore, considering the historiography of *tafsir*, these can be simplistic categories that neither fully encompass the rich and genealogical features of *tafsir* nor account for the core mainstream *Sunni tafsir* corpus for the better part of Muslim intellectual history.[154] Other noteworthy *mufassir*s included al-Wahidi (d. 468) of Nishapur, Ibn Attiya (d. 546) of al-Andalus, and the Persian al-Baydawi (d. 685).

Al-Shafiʿi's conceptualization that gave prophetic reports a unique authority in law also impacted the exegetes. This is clearly evident in the esteemed *tafsir* of al-Tabari (d. 310), considered a *magnum opus* in its field, who argues along the same lines in his Introduction, which in itself utilizes an authorial voice inaugurated by al-Shafiʿi through his theoretical works (compare, for instance, with the lecture notes published by Abu Hanifa's students and Malik's *al-Muwatta* which is simply a compilation of traditions and sayings;[155] earlier Qur'anic commentaries were also published in the form of lecture notes presenting a univocal voice as opposed to the multiple opinions included by al-Tabari).[156] Likewise, following the trajectory of the *hadith* discipline, the fourth century saw a proliferation of *tafasir* grounded in authentic Islamic sources as opposed to pagan references or *isra'iliyyat*. These included the works of the Persian *mufassir*s Ibn Abi Hatim (d. 327), Abu'l Shaykh (d. 369), and Ibn Mardawayh (d. 410). However, with the integration of rational theology into mainstream Islam (see next section), the Sunni establishment embedded theological and literary *tafasir* in *madrasa* curricula rather than these traditionalist ones. For instance, al-Zamakhshari's *tafsir* was part of the standard *madrasa* curriculum for many centuries.[157] Ibn Kathir (d. 774) revived the traditionalist strain when he criticized the inclusion of inauthentic reports and *isra'iliyyat* in Qur'anic commentary;[158] his teachers included al-Fazari (d. 729) and al-Mizzi (d. 742). Significantly, Ibn Kathir was a traditionalist

Shafiʿi who came in the wake of the many strides made by *hadith* sciences, culminating in the *sahih* movement and the acceptance of these collections as definitive and permanent. As such, he evaluated the reports in al-Tabari and Ibn Abi Hatim's works according to the *hadith* canon.[159] Al-Suyuti (d. 911) followed suit, centering *isnad*-based *hadith*s in his *tafsir*. Yet, the traditionalist exegetes remained on the periphery of the Sunni establishment until their works were resurrected and reprinted in the twentieth century.[160] Today, Ibn Kathir's *tafsir* is taught in universities as well as seminaries and has become accessible to the public in its abridged form, turning it into a "central text in the Arabic-Islamic world."[161]

Tafsir, like *sharh al-hadith*, remains a robust field in the present age, but one of the contemporary approaches to *tafsir* has been thematic works that do not focus on the established order of the Qur'an but instead link verses from various sections according to main ideas identified by the writer.[162] In addition, we find original *tafasir* in local languages reflecting indigenous contexts, as opposed to only the proliferation of translated Arabic works which was the norm before.[163]

Section 6: The Synthesis of Rational Theology

The Muʿtazilis continued to teach after the *mihna*. With the emergence of Sunni *mutakallimun*, and despite traditionalist censure, efforts in rationalist theology – finding proofs for universal truths outside of the Qur'an and *Sunnah* in the quest for certitude – kept cropping up. The fact that al-Bukhari believed that *lafz al-Qur'an*, the recitation of the Qur'an, was created goes to show how pervasive *kalam*'s influence had become.[164] However, it was al-Ashʿari's reconciliation of orthodox Islamic concepts with *kalam* – along with the refinement of these ideas over the coming centuries – that brought it into the folds of accepted ideology. Rejecting the createdness of the Qur'an controversially espoused by Muʿtazilis, al-Ashʿari affirmed core traditionalist convictions such as accepting the essential attributes of God as actual, the punishment of the grave, the existence of heaven and hell, and that believers will see God in the hereafter.[165] In giving this priority to revelation, al-Ashʿari nonetheless felt that it was necessary to provide evidentiary proofs and

rational arguments rather than the usual "scriptural attestations" alone.[166] While the Muʿtazilis were overly focused on God's transcendence and the traditionalists confined themselves to more apparent interpretations that in their extreme forms verged on anthropomorphism,[167] al-Ashʿari sought a middle path which was neither excessively allegorical nor literal.[168] In doing so, he shunned any comparisons or similitudes between God and His creation, and instead insisted that it was not possible for humans to understand the true nature of God's attributes.[169] His students and subsequent generations of scholars, such as al-Baqillani (d. 403) and Abu Ishaq al-Isfarayini (d. 418), took the overall theological framework created by al-Ashʿari and built upon it, clarifying and extending his arguments. Eventually, the Ashʿari conception of God became widely accepted among Sunnis, especially among the Malikis and Shafiʿis.

A contemporary of al-Ashʿari, al-Maturidi (d. 333), was developing his own theological critique of Muʿtazilis in Samarqand. He was influenced by Abu Hanifa's opinions that had spread to Central Asia, as well as Murjiʿism, which emerged from the concept of *irjaʿ*, the deferment of passing judgement on companions involved in the early *fitna*s. By now, it was known more by its transfigured implication, fully embraced by al-Maturidi, that one's faith and actions were two separate things and the quality of the latter did not determine the sincerity of the former, with faith neither increasing nor decreasing.[170] Here, he diverged from al-Ashʿari, who asserted that faith consisted of "both beliefs and acts, increasing and decreasing according to the righteousness of the latter"[171] (which was also the position of the traditionalists). Therefore, while Ashʿaris maintained the predestinarian view that God is the ultimate creator of all human acts, al-Maturidi asserted that although actions were decreed by God, humans are free to determine their own deeds.[172] Further, al-Maturidi conceded that the essential (e.g., omniscience and power) and the active (e.g., forgiveness and mercy) attributes of God were coeternal, whereas Ashʿaris only accepted the essential as such.[173] Al-Ashʿari argued that humans know the difference between good and evil through God's revelation, whereas al-Maturidi stated that God has endowed humans with the capacity to distinguish between right and wrong through their reasoning guided by revelation. At the same time,

the two theologians shared their zeal for discrediting Mu'tazili ideology and foregrounding revelation as the basis for rational thought. In doing so, they strived to achieve a balance between revelation and reason, which led to the Muslim *ummah* gaining two theological strains that enabled them to counter external criticism in a rational and coherent manner.[174] Al-Maturidi's ideas won support mainly within the Hanafi *madhhab* and gradually spread to much of the Islamic world through Ottoman support. Prominent Maturidi scholars include theologian Abu al-Muʿin al-Nasafi (d. 508) and Jamal al-Din al-Ghaznawi (d. 593).

Hence, the fourth century AH was marked not only by the crystallization of the four *madhahib* but also the advancement of the theological schools which became embedded in these legal schools. Hanbalis maintained their own staunchly traditionalist brand of theology, which encouraged a simple reading of scripture (both Qur'an and *Sunnah*) and spurned *kalam*. The prestigious al-Azhar University was also founded in this century in Cairo by the Shiʿa Fatimids in 360 AH; it was later converted to a Sunni institution by Salahuddin Ayyubi (r. 566-589). A simultaneous current that began to simmer in the Muslim world in third century onwards was *falsafa* (philosophy). While the Muʿtazilis adopted Hellenistic reasoning as a common language with their non-Muslim counterparts, the Muslim philosophers mastered Greek philosophy and endeavored to integrate it with the theocentric worldview of Islam, seeking certitude through demonstrative proofs. Al-Kindi (d. ca. 252), a key figure in Baghdad's nascent House of Wisdom, was responsible for overseeing the translation of Greek works into Arabic. His thinking was greatly shaped by these philosophical treatises and he wrote many texts of his own on a range of subjects; as such, he has been called the father of Arabic philosophy. In an atmosphere heavily influenced by the Muʿtazilis, al-Kindi strived to show the compatibility between theology and philosophy to prove universal truths for the sake of verifying creed. While his intellectual output was later overshadowed by the philosophers al-Farabi (d. 339) and Ibn Sina (d. 428), the "translations produced in the Kindi circle would become standard philosophical texts for centuries to come."[175] Al-Farabi came to be known as the "Second Teacher," after Aristotle,

who was known as the "First Teacher."[176] Ibn Sina, trained in the Islamic sciences from an early age, has a preeminent position within philosophy as a grand systematizer who is also renowned for his synthesis of rational philosophy and rational theology.

Kalam prior to Ibn Sina was formulated in reaction to Muʿtazili stances; as such, the theories and arguments developed by Sunni *mutakallimun* had remained generally the same in the intervening centuries.[177] Meanwhile, *falsafa* had been independently evolving from the time of al-Kindi with very little influence on theology.[178] Ibn Sina masterfully fused these two separate strands together so that "post-[Ibn Sinan] *kalam* emerged as a truly Islamic philosophy, a synthesis of [Ibn Sina's] metaphysics and Muslim doctrine."[179] The two main contributions of Ibn Sina which highly influenced future theologians were his distinction between existence and essence, along with distinguishing "that which is necessary by virtue of itself…, namely, God," from "that which is necessary but by virtue of another…, namely, everything other than God (which is deemed to exist necessarily, albeit by virtue of God and not by virtue of itself)."[180] In doing so, Ibn Sina's conception of God reduced His connection to the world as passive and encompassing only general knowledge. This view yielded a lot of criticism from theologians.[181] However, considering that contemporary *kalam* had become inadequate and outdated in the face of the far more sophisticated *falsafa*, theologians in the post-Ibn Sina era had no choice but to tackle the pillar of philosophy erected by Ibn Sina, even as they sought to refute him.[182] In the process, Sunni *mutakallimun* grounded their rational claims using Ibn Sina's writings, thereby consolidating these ideas in Sunni theology.[183] The increasing use of logic along with philosophical terms and categories in theological reasoning illuminate the enduring influence of Ibn Sina on Islamic thought, as shown below.[184]

Section 7: Reason v. Revelation I

The fifth century saw the rise of al-Ghazali (d. 505), who is commonly known as a *mujaddid* (renewer) of the faith. A student of the famous Shafiʿi and Ashʿari scholar al-Juwayni (d. 478), al-Ghazali was recruited by Nizam al-Mulk (d. 485), the grand vizier of the Seljuk empire, to

teach in the newly introduced chain of Islamic colleges, al-Nizamiyya, which subscribed to the Shafiʿi Ashʿari orientation and, hence, aided in its spread.[185] The first one was established in Baghdad in 457 AH, and al-Ghazali began teaching there in 484 AH. Just as other eminent scholars had done before him, al-Ghazali sought to protect the purity of the *din* (religion, i.e., Islam) from any corrupting forces. Now that theology was in the process of being integrated into mainstream Sunni scholarship, the threat that Sunni orthodoxy faced was the encroachment of *falsafa*.[186] An important point to note is that al-Ghazali was not so much opposed to philosophy itself but rather the distortion of core Islamic concepts by Muslim philosophers such as al-Farabi and Ibn Sina.[187] In his *Incoherence of the Philosophers*, he highlighted three conclusions which he deemed to be theologically fallacious and, hence, constituted unbelief (*kufr*): their assertion that the universe is coeternal with God, the denial of bodily resurrection, and the declaration that God only has knowledge of universals, not particulars.[188] As for their other claims, some he deemed *bidʿa* (innovative) and others as tolerable. In doing so, al-Ghazali himself displayed remarkable command of logic and philosophy, deconstructing and critiquing *falsafa* with skill and mastery. At the same time, he sought to resolve the tension between reason and revelation by proposing that those verses that cannot be rationally explained be interpreted in a figurative manner (*ta'wil*). For instance, he explained, since there are "valid demonstrative arguments proving that God cannot have a 'hand' or sit on a 'throne'," these should be read symbolically.[189] This resolution, known and elaborated as the universal rule, preferred reason over revelation; it came to be widely accepted by Muslim theologians and became the standard Ashʿari position.[190]

While al-Ghazali is often blamed for the decline of philosophy in the Muslim world in modern times, he in fact introduced Aristotelian logic – via Ibn Sina's writings – in theological discourse so much so that it became a permanent feature of subsequent literature.[191] As such, rather than banishing philosophy completely, it became repurposed, adapted into *kalam*, and accepted accordingly within mainstream Islamic thought; this can be seen most clearly in the scholarship of al-Razi a century after al-Ghazali.[192] Further, Ibn Rushd (d. 520), one of the greatest

Muslim philosophers who hailed from Muslim Spain, followed al-Ghazali with a critical response, *Incoherence of the Incoherence*. Although *falsafa* proper, like Muʿtazili theology, found better reception among the Shiʿa and thrived there, it did not entirely disappear among the Sunnis, as evident in the scholarship of the Andalusians, Ibn Bajja (d. 533) and Ibn Tufayl (d. 581), as well as the Persian Suhrawardi (d. 587), and the Ottoman Anqarawi (d. 1631).[193] The increasingly diverse and religiously pluralistic world of al-Ghazali is reflected in another important text he wrote, which explained how to reconcile the numerous strains within the Muslim *ummah*, including the various *madhahib* and theological schools, not to mention other strands such as *falsafa*, *tasawwuf* (Sufism), and Shiʿa sects. In order to forge unity and discourage the hasty charge of *kufr*, he emphasized the commonality around basic beliefs, i.e., testifying to the oneness of God, the prophethood of Muhammad (s), and existence of the Day of Judgement, while also underscoring the importance of affirming what has been established through *tawatur* (massive transmissions)[194] or *ijmaʿ* (consensus) of the Prophetic *Sunnah*. If someone contradicts any of these, then they may be denounced as an unbeliever (*kafir*) – because essentially they are saying that the Prophet (s) lied, which is tantamount to blasphemy.[195] In doing so, he created expansive boundaries for multiplicity in interpretation and approach, protected under the umbrella of religious tolerance.

Despite vigorously defending Islam through his academic work, his many accomplishments, and his constant efforts in validating creed through theological reasoning, al-Ghazali experienced a crisis of faith in 488 AH. He abruptly left his teaching position along with its accompanying pomp and prestige, choosing the minimalistic life of an ascetic instead.[196] Having gained proficiency in a host of Islamic sciences, al-Ghazali grasped that theological erudition was not sufficient in and of itself in gaining redemption in the hereafter; he felt closest to achieving this goal and sensing certitude when he was among the spiritually-fulfilling milieu of the mystics.[197] During this time, he wrote *Revival of the Religious Sciences* (*Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*) in which he made a persuasive case for infusing *tasawwuf* into theology. Preoccupied with salvation in the afterlife, al-Ghazali criticized the worldly environment of *'ulama* who

are beholden to the court and sought to ground Islamic practice, both scholarly as well as individual, in the "living presence of God."[198] In order to do so, he integrated the otherwise parallel world of Sufism into Islamic orthodoxy by emphasizing that "a life according to the Shari'a was the necessary basis of the sufistic life,"[199] thereby arguing that it was at the heart of religious sciences, not external to them. As such, he declared that *tasawwuf* was a necessary component to be internalized by every Muslim individual, not something to be undertaken by a select few.[200] He was finally persuaded to return to academia and spent his last years teaching at al-Nizamiyya in Nishapur, which incidentally was where he had received his initial education.

Section 8: *Tasawwuf*

Original traces of what eventually morphed into the Sufi movement, as mentioned at the beginning of this article, were present in Basra in the austere and spiritually devoted figure of al-Hasan al-Basri, whose teachings impacted generations of students. The designation of "sufi" (from *suf*, Arabic for wool) was applied in the second century AH to self-abnegating individuals who wore wool to signify their renunciation of the world. The initial manifestation of this worldview was expressed in a variety of social and spiritual ways by numerous pious people united in their aversion of material pursuits.[201] Inward-looking, focused on self-control, and driven to attain closeness to God, they eventually emerged as a unified group in Baghdad in the second half of the third century AH, with Junayd al-Baghdadi (d. 298) being a renowned member; eventually, the term Sufi came to represent a distinctive mode of piety as embodied by these mystics.[202] There were other regional Sufi circles in various parts of the Muslim world, including Iran, Central Asia, as well as Syria, and while differing in practice, they shared a general affinity due to their ascetic lifestyles.[203] They were on a path (*tariq*), marked by stations (*maqamat*; sing. *maqam*), leading to annihilation of the self and attainment of certain knowledge of God. Those that reached this outcome were among the spiritual elect (*wali*, pl. *awliya'*), the masters, among the *khassa*. As in other Islamic disciplines, disciples spread and recorded their master's teachings and

biographies, analyzing and extending their scholarship.[204] Students also sought out multiple teachers, as with *hadith* and jurisprudence.[205]

Within Sufism, there has always existed an extremist fringe that exhibited antinomian qualities.[206] These figures, such as Bayazid (d. 234) and al-Hallaj (d. 309), have considered themselves above and beyond established traditions, indulging in questionable acts and declarations that triggered criticism from not only the mainstream scholarly class but also fellow Sufis, the majority of whom continued to ground their spiritual endeavors in the Shariʿah.[207] In fact, many strong critics of Sufism, including Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597) and Ibn Taymiyya (d. 728), were themselves Sufis who only denounced its radical elements.[208] As a result, there was an urgency to delineate "normative" Sufi practices and thus formed two orientations, the traditionalist and the academic; as was typically the case in other Islamic fields, the latter embraced rational theology whereas the former rejected it.[209] Exemplars of traditionalist Sufis were Abu Talib al-Makki (d. 386), Abu Nuʿaym al-Isfahani (d. 430), and ʿAbd Allah al-Ansari (d. 481). Their rationalist counterparts were al-Sarraj (d. 378), al-Sulami (d. 412), and al-Qushayri. Al-Qushayri was the star student of al-Hasan ibn ʿAli al-Daqqaq (d. 405); al-Daqqaq wedded his daughter, Fatima bint al-Hasan (d. 480), a Nishapuri *hadith* scholar and an ascetic, to al-Qushayri, who became a known Ashʿari[210] whose books and *tafsir* helped crystalize the theological synthesis of Sufism.[211] Several famed scholars emerged from this family in the many generations after Fatima. These included the historian al-Farisi (d. 529) along with the *hadith* scholars Amat al-Qahir Jawhar (d. 530) and Amat Allah Jalila (d. 541).[212] They represent the kinship networks among *ʿulama* families which became customary across the Muslim world.[213] This Shafiʿi-Ashʿari-Sufi current of Nishapur is also connected to al-Ghazali's transformation. Al-Ghazali was familiar with Sufism from his earliest studies in Nishapur, because he had many teachers who were sympathetic to Sufism. It is possible that when he became more interested in theology and philosophy, he may have neglected *tasawwuf*. However, when theology and philosophy proved inadequate for him, he turned to mysticism and returned to Nishapur.[214] In turn, the theology-minded Sufis' efforts were complemented by al-Ghazali's aims to generalize Sufism and led to a

cross-fertilization that helped promote Sufi teachings and infused them into the lives of ordinary people.[215]

Beyond theoretical endeavors, Sufis increasingly started forming spiritual lineages and strengthened the master-disciple relationship centered on training, with the focus shifting to having a single master during the seventh and eighth centuries.[216] Some of the major figures which became eponyms of later Sufi orders (*tariqa*s) were ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Jilani (d. 561), Muʿin al-Din Chishti (d. 633), and Baha' al-Din Naqshband (d. 791). This formalization of Sufism resulted in the Sufi lodge growing into an enduring institution and the flourishing of *tariqa*s, exemplified by practices such as *dhikr* (remembrance of God through invocation), *wird* (litany), simple living, and seclusion.[217] The captivating influence of Sufi masters, however, came hand-in-hand with royal favor and the dependency on "worldly networks of clients and institutions of patronage."[218] This paradox of worldliness in the aftermath of Sufism's institutionalization prompted a counter-culture of traveling *derwishe*s (mendicants), such as the Qalandariyah, who refused to conform to any conventions and carried much influence in the countryside, where they were frequently the major source of Islamic knowledge.[219] Their plain-spoken message of piety and poverty attracted a devout following, despite their often eccentric appearances and practices.[220] Together, these developments coincided with the rise in popular fervor around sainthood, although not every Sufi master-trainer or *derwish* captured such attention.[221] Nonetheless, people were drawn to the *awliya'* and celebrated them by building elaborate tomb-shrines, hoping for their intercession; these customs, fueled by devotees, spread Sufi ideas into every sphere of society, taking a life of their own, often in contradiction to more formal Sufi traditions.[222]

Sufism's spiritual zeal was also adapted into philosophy, most prominently represented by the intellectual Ibn al-ʿArabi (d. 638) and his followers, such as al-Qunawi (d. 673) and al-Qaysari (d. 751). As a matter of fact, Ibn al-ʿArabi persistently disavowed the philosophers' claim that reason is the apex of all knowledge, even as he acknowledged the importance of logic and its benefits. Instead, he advocated for "direct divine 'revelation'"[223] – referred to as *kashf* (unveiling), *fath* (opening), *tajalli* (manifestation), etc. – which alone could yield truly "worthwhile knowledge, consisting

of metaphysical insights and … the knowledge of God." He believed that only a select few could reach this level of *maʿrifa* (gnosis), and considered himself to be one of them.[224] In explicating his theories, Ibn al-ʿArabi linked Qur'an, *hadith*, and practice of the faith with a "comprehensive metaphysical and cosmological vision."[225] Clearly influenced by al-Ghazali (and unconsciously borrowing from Ibn Sina[226]), his constant reference to *falsafa* was indicative of the intellectual culture of his time,[227] causing him to adopt a metaphysical vocabulary that actually gave generations of disciples the tools to "bring Sufism closer to the discourse of *falsafah*."[228] Ibn al-ʿArabi was born in al-Andalus, studied the Islamic sciences with several teachers, traveled widely, and later settled in Damascus. He had a great influence among the Ottomans, where commentaries on his works at one point were adopted as *madrasa* textbooks and his controversial doctrine of *wahdat al-wujud* (oneness of being)[229] became the central Ottoman Sufi tenet from the 8th century AH onwards.[230] Scholars, including Sufis, have critiqued this doctrine for erasing the creator-creature division, thus promoting antinomian qualities as well as undermining religious law.[231] The development of the Sufi-philosophical ideas is illustrative of yet another post-Ibn Sinan phenomenon where subsequent scholars – whether philosophers, *mutakallimun*, or Sufi – employed Ibn Sina's conceptual and linguistic framework to "assemble their own metaphysical systems."[232] These sophisticated and technical epistemologies eventually merged with Shiʿa scholarship, where philosophy came to be known as *hikmat*.[233]

Section 9: Reason v. Revelation II

From the seventh century AH onwards till the modern times, certain Sunni systems became embedded in the Middle East and South Asia. Calling it the Late Sunni Tradition, Brown explains, "A Muslim scholar … would loyally follow one of the established schools of law, one of the established schools of speculative theology, and participate in one or more Sufi brotherhoods."[234] This period is also known for the leniency of *hadith* scholars in authenticating many *hadith*s that were previously considered problematic. To their credit, they had a lot more narrations at their disposal than al-Bukhari and Muslim, for example; however, many *hadith* critics, including the Syrian al-Nawawi,

the compiler of *Riyad as-Salihin* (*The Gardens of the Righteous*), cited Ibn Hanbal's precedence in utilizing weak *hadith*s in matters not related to the prohibition or permissibility of an act. Hence, so long as they could prove that a *hadith* was not forged, it became admissible.[235] At the same time, *hadith* scholars such as the Kurdish Ibn al-Salah (d. 643) emphasized that *isnad* was not the only way to ensure reliable transmission through the centuries; in fact, there was a need to meticulously collate all existing manuscripts of an extant work to establish reliability.[236] As a result, the Syrian al-Yunini (d. 701) and later the Egyptian Ibn Hajar al-ʿAsqalani produced critical recensions of al-Bukhari's *Sahih*.[237] During this time, women thrived in *hadith* scholarship and benefited yet again from the stability of traditionalism.[238] With the widespread acceptance of written transmissions (*ijaza*s) and the proliferation of elite *'ulama'* families, women's endeavors flourished during the sixth to the ninth centuries AH.[239] Often, women learned in informal settings, away from the more standardized *madrasa*s, giving them the flexibility not only to obtain *ijaza*s but also grant them.[240] In Damascus, renowned female scholars included Fatima bint ʿAbbas (d. 714), Sitt al-Wuzara' (d. 716), Zaynab bint al-Kamal (d. 740), ʿA'isha bint Muhammad (d. 816), and Bai Khatun (d. 864). Zaynab reportedly gave an *ijaza* to Ibn Battuta (d. 779).[241]

The seventh to eighth century AH also witnessed the revival of Ibn Hanbal's staunch traditionalism in the formidable appearance of Ibn Taymiyya, who singlehandedly revived the debate over reason and revelation, taking on the Shafiʿi Ashʿari elites in Damascus, which attracted a medley of scholars after the tragic fall of Baghdad[242] in 656 AH.[243] Just as al-Ghazali learned philosophy *par excellence* in order to undermine its erroneous conclusions, Ibn Taymiyya acquired an expertise in *kalam* in an effort to invalidate it; like his predecessor Ibn Hazm (d. 456), Ibn Taymiyya fiercely criticized the theological and philosophical bent of Islamic scholarship.[244] Note that the Hanbali Ibn Taymiyya did not reject *kalam* itself,[245] like al-Ghazali did not oppose philosophy as a science. Therefore, just as al-Ghazali's writing ended up incorporating *falsafa*, Ibn Taymiyya too adopted a theological style in his output, with his brand of *kalam* known as "Qur'anic rational theology … based more squarely on the revealed texts while nevertheless fully engaging the philosophical tradition."[246] In doing so, Ibn Taymiyya did not reject reason altogether in

favor of revelation; instead, he contextualized reason in light of revelation, demonstrating that "sound reason and authentic revelation never come into actual conflict."[247] In the process, he showed that the very concept of reason, as employed by both theologians and philosophers, is flawed. He was also keenly aware that the rationalized version of God was so abstract and remote that it made it difficult for one to love God and be in awe of Him in order to fully worship and obey Him, something which he sought to rectify. Unlike the theologians/philosophers who endorsed reason without qualification, and al-Ghazali who found it lacking certainty in his quest for knowing the truth,[248] Ibn Taymiyya presented reason as natural intellect which upholds revelation, thereby resolving the tension between reason and revelation along with refuting the universal rule articulated by al-Ghazali and explicated by al-Razi.[249] For instance, he took contemporary theologians to task for divorcing language from its intended context by translating *ta'wil* as figurative interpretation, when the *Salaf* – the first three generations of Muslims[250] – only used it as *tafsir* or knowledge solely possessed by God. By foregrounding the *Salaf*, Ibn Taymiyya invoked them as authoritative figures and the most important referents for understanding the depth of revelation.[251] Employing philosophical and theological arguments, he called for a return to the primary sources of the Shariʿah (Qur'an, *Sunnah*, consensus, and analogy), just as al-Shafiʿi and Ibn Hanbal had before him. Ibn Taymiyya castigated the scholarly elitism (*al-khassa*) of Damascus, investing in more egalitarian interpretations that would be particularly attractive to later Salafis.

Although Ibn Taymiyya has often been depicted as a dogmatic literalist, he actually displayed exceptional skill in engaging with both rationalist positions and the intellectual tradition, something which scholars are beginning to acknowledge.[252] Yet, unlike al-Ghazali, Ibn Taymiyya did not impact much change until his works, like Ibn Kathir's *tafsir*, were revived in the modern age and gained currency due to his centering of the Qur'an, the Prophetic *Sunnah*, and the *Salaf*. In fact, reminiscent of the persecution endured by Ibn Hanbal, Ibn Taymiyya too paid the price of his strident views by being imprisoned multiple times, ultimately dying in his jail cell.[253] Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (d. 751) was his foremost disciple and remained faithful to him. Their contemporaries in Damascus included the Shafiʿi

Ashʿaris Taqi al-Din al-Subki (d. 756) and his son Taj al-Din al-Subki (d. 771), who held powerful positions as Chief Judges, as well as the Shafiʿi traditionalists al-Dhahabi (d. 748), a *hadith* critic, and Ibn Taymiyya's student, Ibn Kathir.[254] Despite the persistent existence of a traditionalist strain, Ashʿari and Maturidi theological schools continued to flourish, as apparent in the works of the Persians al-Taftazani (d. 794) and al-Jurjani (d. 817) and their influence on Ottoman *ʿulama*.[255] The exceptional Ibn Khaldun (d. 808), a social historian and philosopher of history who was born in Tunis, also contributed to theological scholarship. A Maliki Ashʿari, he cautioned against the liberal use of reason, reminding his peers that to recognize the limits of reason does not negate it.[256] He advocated logical techniques for the sake of attaining clarity but maintained that reason alone cannot unveil universal truths which can only be accessed through religion. Hence, he recommended that reason be used in conjunction with "religious knowledge, and most importantly that it be employed critically."[257]

Another Maliki, al-Shatibi (d. 790), censured both the extreme strictness of the Sufis and the indulgent leniency of his fellow jurists in Andalus, calling people to follow the middle path as practiced by the Prophet (s) and his companions. Reacting to the entrenched elitism of both the Sufis and the *fuqaha'*, he highlighted the simple nature of revelation which had come to an unlettered people, thereby rejecting the interpolation of complex sciences such as theology and philosophy; instead, he emphasized that law must be explained in a way which makes it easier for ordinary people (*al-ʿamma*) to fulfill their daily obligations.[258] In order to do so, he clarified that the Shariʿah must be implemented keeping in mind the higher objectives (*maqasid al-Shariʿah*) – the protections of faith, life, progeny, property, and intellect – that underpin its execution on moral foundations.[259] At the same time, he cautioned that while Shariʿah is meant to benefit people, it must be determined as intended by God through revelation and not become subservient to the whims of humans.[260]

Section 10: Regional Linkages

In the eighth century AH and onward, the Ottoman Empire, which had embraced the Hanafi *madhhab* together with Maturidi theology, became

the site of various scholarly conflicts reflective of the larger *ummah*. This included the widespread recognition and integration of theology and logic, as displayed in the lasting influence of al-Sanusi (d. 895), with a minority scholarly population, such as al-Yusi (d. 1691), maintaining a sustained vociferous objection to such ideologies. In addition, Sufi beliefs and practices were woven into the very fabric of Ottoman life.[261] Scholarly engagement throughout cities in the Ottoman Empire, as in previous times, enabled *'ulama'* to interact and learn from one another, their shared Arabic language facilitating dialogue.[262] Turkish was written using the Arabic script from the tenth through the early 20th century CE at which time it was replaced with Latin alphabets. Prominent scholars included the Turkish al-Bursevi, aka Hocazade (d. 893), Kemalpaşazade (d. 942), Abu l-Su'ud Effendi (d. 982), Tashkubrizade (d. 968), Katib Čelebi (d. 1657), and Minkarizade (d. 1677), as well as the Yemeni Aydarusi (d. 1627), Khayr al-Din (d. 1671) of Ramla, al-Nabulsi (d. 1731) of Damascus, and the Bosnian Mehmed Refik Hadžiabdić (d. 1872). The efforts of the Kurdish al-Kurani (d. 1690) in obtaining the works of Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Jawziyya as well as his subsequent commentary were crucial in rehabilitating the image of Ibn Taymiyya in modern Islamic thought.[263] Across the Ottoman Muslim world, women continued to engage in Islamic scholarship with a wider interest in the various sciences.[264] While Umm al-Khayr Amat al-Khaliq (d. 902) al-Dimashqiyyah and Umm al-Hana bint Muhammad al-Misriyyah (d. 911) were renowned *hadith* scholars, others went beyond *hadith* studies. For example, Asma' bint Kamal al-Din (d. 904) of Zabid and 'A'isha al-Ba'uniyya (d. 922), who was born in Damascus, excelled in Qur'an, *hadith*, and law; Fatima bint Yusuf (d. 925), who settled in Makkah and died there, was known for her asceticism; Khadija bint Muhammad (d. 930) of Aleppo was learned in *fiqh*; Fatima bint Abd al-Qadir (d. 966) of Aleppo was the *shaykha* of two Sufi institutions, and Zaynab bint Muhammad (d. 980), born in Damascus, extended her *hadith* expertise to calligraphy.[265]

Arabic also provided important regional linkages between Muslims of East and West Africa with the rest of the Islamic world. Through trade and intellectual exchanges, sub-Saharan Africa became integrated with the rest of the *ummah*. Arabic-speakers were present in West Africa as

early as the 11th century CE and the Arabic language gradually became "central to the social and intellectual life of Muslim communities," so much so that later military expeditions spearheaded by scholars resulted in the establishing of states where Arabic would be the language of administration and instruction.[266] Many of the major Islamic works could be found in West Africa where scholars also generated commentaries based on their own contexts, both in Arabic and in *Ajami* (local languages using an Arabic script).[267] Known as *Bilad al-Sudan*, Land of the Blacks, the Maliki *madhhab* proliferated there. In addition to legal opinions, *ijaza*s, and commentaries, West African scholars produced devotional, polemical, and political writings.[268] Sufism continues to dominate in the region despite recent challenges from Salafis (see next section). Prominent West African scholars include Ahmad Baba al-Timbukti (d. 1627), ʿUthman dan Fodio (d. 1817), al-Kanimi (d. 1837), Umar Tall (d. 1864), al-Shinqiti (d. 1913) of present-day Mauritania, Ahmad Bamba (d. 1927), and Ibrahim Niasse (d. 1975) of Senegal. Female *ʿalima*s and *muqaddama*s (spiritual guides) were Maryam Nafisa bint Ahmad Mahmud (d. 1954), Fatimatu bint al- Sarri Muhammadi (d. 1958), Safiya bint al-Bah (d. 1974), Hajiya Saudatu (d. 1976), Hajiya Iya (d. 1986), and Aminatu bint ʿAbdallahi (d. 1997).[269] East Africa, where the Shafiʿi *madhhab* along with Sufism gained currency, was greatly influenced by Yemen and the Hadramawt along with interaction with Persia as well as Oman.[270] Harar, for instance, has 356 saints, 10 percent of whom are female.[271] Due to commercial ties, Islam spread as early as the eighth century CE on the East African coast but made its mark inland as late as the 19th century.[272] The union of male Muslim traders with local women resulted in the emergence of a "Swahili society, a culture both African and Islamic."[273] Kiswahili was also written in the Arabic script until colonial times. In the modern period, the region's Sufi traditions have come under attack with the increasingly political Salafi opposition.[274] Key East African figures include Ahmad ibn Ibrahim of Harar (d. 949), Muhammad Mar'uf ibn Ahmad (d. 1905), Uways al-Barawi (d. 1909), and Al Amin ibn Ali al-Mazrui from Mombasa (d. 1947).

Similar to the spread of Islam in sub-Saharan Africa, commercial activity first introduced Islam to Southeast Asia in the 11th century

CE.[275] Muslim traders came from the Middle East, southern Arabia (Hadramawt), India, and China; some eventually married local women and settled in the Malay archipelago.[276] The local populations found Sufi ideas and practices appealing which aided their amenability to accepting the faith;[277] ultimately, they adopted the Shafiʿi Ashʿari orientation with a strong Sufi tendency.[278] The Arabic script was also embraced for Malay, known as *Jawi*, and served as a unifying language across the archipelago; it became the standard Malay language until the 20th century and propelled the advent of a vibrant literary and religious written culture.[279] During colonial times, Jawi was mostly relegated to the religious education sphere. In Malaysia, the Latin script was adopted in order to be inclusive of its diverse population; however, Jawi continues to be one of the official languages in Brunei.[280] Engagement with the Islamic centers of learning across the world enabled scholarly interaction, flow of books, and exchange of ideas.[281] Many Southeast Asian students, also known as *Jawi* in the Arab lands, went to study Islam abroad and returned to the Malay archipelago to teach and undertake religious duties; some chose to relocate to the Middle East.[282] *Hajj* provided a crucial platform for scholarly encounters and propagation of knowledge both for sub-Saharan African and Southeast Asian Muslims, as well as for scholars and students from other parts of the Muslim world. Countering narratives of unidirectionality and peripheral existence, as with West Africa, scholars emphasize "multidirectional flow of ideas" between the Malay archipelago and the rest of the *ummah*.[283] Some of the renowned scholars hailing from various parts of Southeast Asia were Abdurrauf Singkel of Sumatra (d. 1693), Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari (d. 1812), Dawud al-Fattani (d. 1847), Ahmad Khatib of Minangkabau (d. 1916), Tok Kenali (d. 1933), Hamka (d. 1981), and Harun Nasution (d. 1998). Many queens ruled Southeast Asia at different junctures and advanced the spread of Islam while also sponsoring religious scholarship. Examples include Taj al-ʿAlam Safiyyat al-Din Syah (d. 1675) and Sultana Zakiyat al-Din Syah (d. 1688) of Aceh. As wives of rulers, pious women such as Ratu Pakubuwana (d. 1732) and Ratu Ageng (d. 1803) of Java also patronized religious learning and created spaces where devotional practice could take place.[284]

China's Muslim Hui community has been an integral part of its history since the arrival of merchants from the Islamic world around the 14th century CE. Hu Dengzhou (d. 1597) traveled to Islamic hubs of learning in Central Asia and Makkah to gain knowledge which he disseminated to the local population after his return; he brought crucial religious texts with him which enabled him to create a systematized program known as scripture hall education.[285] Soon, the *Han Kitab* genre flourished which brought a comingling of Islamic and Chinese literary traditions; these were Chinese-language Islamic texts that made "advanced Islamic teaching accessible to the highly Sinicized Muslims of Southeast China" and became a hallmark of local religious education.[286] Wang Daiyu (d. 1650) and Liu Zhi (d. 1724), both from Nanjing, along with Yunnan's Ma Zhu (d. 1711) epitomized the thriving Han Kitab literature. Yunnan's Ma Dexin (d. 1874) and Ma Lianyuan (d. 1903) represent a shift toward the writing of Arabic and Persian texts.[287] Muslim women initiated schools for fellow women which have later emerged as female-run mosques that are also devoted to community service.[288] As in other places, *Hajj* embodied both spiritual and communal significance for Sino-Muslims, giving them an opportunity to interact with the scholarly networks both during their travel as well as in Makkah and Madina.[289]

Islam has been vibrant for centuries in modern-day Xinjiang where it has sustained the Uyghurs, a Turkic people that identify more with their Central Asian counterparts than China which annexed it in 1884; regionally, various dialects of *Turki*, which uses an Arabic script, are still spoken and are mutually understandable. The Naqshabandi Sufi order has been quite popular among the Uyghurs whose mystic orientation has been captured by the *tazkirah* genre of writing.[290] Saint veneration at shrines, located generally in remote areas, has been a common form of piety although there have been reform efforts of such practices in modern times due to Salafi influences.[291] Arshad al-Din (d. 766) and Afaq Khoja (d. 1694) are two historical figures that have gained sainthood over time. The Chechen Kunta-Hajji (d. 1867) and the Daghestani al-Ghazi Ghumuqi (d. 1869) were Qadiriyya and Naqshbandiyya-Khalidiyya Sufi masters, respectively, in these Muslim-majority areas of the North Caucasus where Sufism also held sway.[292] Despite their resistance,

both Chechnya and Daghestan eventually became republics of Russia. Within the Russian empire, the published works of the Hanafi Maturidi al-Marjani (d. 1889) of present-day Tatarstan represent the grappling of social realities via theological discourse during the nineteenth century.[293] Azerbaijan, which has a majority Shiʿa population, also endured Russian rule and restrictions on the practice of Islam but became independent in the 20th century. The sixth Shaykh al-Islam of the Caucasus, Muhammad Hasan Shakavi (d. 1932), has written a commentary of the Qur'an in Azeri.

Section 11: Reform and Revival

The period since the 18th century CE (approximately the 12th century AH onwards) was marked by reform and revival movements which emerged in West Africa, Central Arabia, and South Asia in the face of modernization and colonization.[294] Early revivalist scholars were Shah Wali Allah (d. 1762) in India, al-Sanʿani (d. 1768) in Yemen, Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhab (d. 1792) in the Hijaz, and ʿUthman dan Fodio in modern-day Nigeria. Dan Fodio was also a revolutionary military leader of the expansionist Sokoto Caliphate. As the Ottoman and Mughal Empires slowly imploded and then quickly disintegrated, scholars scrambled to make sense of this rapid decline of the Muslim *ummah*.[295] In doing so, they also had to contend with Orientalists who were keen to school Muslims about Islam and its history.[296] Then, too, the ever growing influence of Western colonial education disrupted both the financial backing and prestige of Islamic institutions, with graduates and scholars suddenly facing a changed landscape where neither their expertise held any value nor the languages they had mastered.[297] This precarious environment led scholars to hold on to the *madhahib* in an "uncompromising and uncritical manner."[298] The increasing focus on theology and Sufism since the postclassical period resulted in scholarly engagement with recent texts in the form of commentaries and glosses, leading to the wide usage of a curriculum that was no longer in touch with classical works.[299] Interestingly, the written culture had taken on such a life – as feared by the prescient Ibn Hanbal[300] – that layers upon layers of authorial scholarly voices had created a distance from the classical *'ulama'* and their groundbreaking

works. This, combined with the European zeal for obtaining ancient Islamic texts (whether through looting or buying) caused a decrease in availability of classical books as well as their neglect.[301] A significant component of the reform and revival movement was the identification and recension of early manuscripts by committed bibliophiles, editors, and publishers.[302] Influenced by scholars such as al-Shawkani (d. 1834), al-Attar (d. 1835), Siddiq Hasan Khan (d. 1890), and al-Ta'wil (d. 1899), who emphasized the importance of the classical period, reformers such as Rifaʿa al-Tahtawi (d. 1873), Muhammad ʿAbduh (d. 1905), al-Husayni (d. 1914), al-Jaza'iri (d. 1920), Ahmad Zaki (d. 1934), Rashid Rida (d. 1935), and Ahmad Shakir (d. 1958) devoted themselves to locating, authenticating, editing, and financing the printing of such works as Ibn Khaldun's *al-Muqaddima*, al-Shafiʿi's *Umm*, al-Tabari's Qur'anic commentary, Ibn Taymiyya's numerous works, and Ibn Kathir's *tafsir*, among others.[303]

The rise of print media and the decline of traditional Islamic learning made scholarly works not only easily available to people beyond the *'ulama'*, but also provided an opportunity for intellectuals and autodidacts to analyze them and reach their own conclusions without the time-honored teacher-student training based on *isnad*.[304] Critiquing the entrenched ideologies constitutive of the postclassical period as *taqlid* (blind following),[305] which in their opinion had led to stagnation, reformers and activists demanded a return to these original texts in order to emerge out of the current malaise.[306] They saw this textual corpus as a "reservoir of intellectual and ethical resources necessary for the development of Muslim societies" which "could be harnessed to combat the backwardness and superstition that early twentieth century reformers saw in the postclassical tradition" even as "it offered a vantage point from which to engage with Western thought and its political and cultural hegemony without losing one's identity."[307] As such, the reform and revival movements formed in conversation with both the indigenous Islamic heritage and the Western gaze Muslims apprehensively grappled with in modern times. They were largely motivated by a quest to undermine the postclassical tradition, seeking to disrupt the hierarchy of classical and postclassical scholars (*al-khassa*) with a more egalitarian view of Islam that equally privileged themselves.[308]

While Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi (d. 1890) focused on political reform, the works of Jamal al-din al-Afghani (d. 1897), al-Kawakibi (d. 1902) in Syria, Muhammad Iqbal (d. 1938) in India, and Hasan al-Banna (d. 1949) in Egypt criticized Western encroachment and called for the unification of Muslims. Further, Sayyid Qutb (d. 1966), Mawdudi (d. 1979), and Muhammad Asad (d. 1992) challenged Western notions of modernity and development, especially as adopted by Muslim regimes, and advanced alternate models grounded in Islam.[309] At times, scholars were at loggerheads over different conceptions of reform. For instance, in India, the reformist ideologies of Shah Muhammad Ismaʿil (d. 1831) and Fazl-i Haqq Khayrabadi (d. 1861), the respective scholars who inspired the later Deobandi and Barelwi schools, fiercely clashed even though each sought to safeguard the faith from the colonial threat and to define what it meant to be truly Muslim in the modern context.[310] Likewise with the Barelwi Ahmad Raza Khan (d. 1921) and the Deobandi Ashraf Ali Thanwi (d. 1943), mirroring the larger dialectic across the *ummah* between the postclassical traditionalists and the Salafis in the 20th century. In fact, this intense debate between the Deobandis and Barelwis on how best to honor the Prophet Muhammad (s) has continued in the subcontinent even in the postcolonial present.[311] Women, who became subjects of reform (as evident in Thanwi's *Baheshti Zewar*[312]), also actively participated in Islamic revival movements from the confines of their homes.[313] They became an integral part of the Tablighi Jamaat, founded by Ilyas Kandhlewi (d. 1944) in India, even though it had started out as an all-male affair.[314] On the move with their government-employed husbands and away from their *zenana* (female) quarters back home, these women found creative ways to take part in political and spiritual movements.[315] Unlike South Asia, women gather in mosques in countries such as Egypt, Iran, and Malaysia, where similar trends in female activism can be seen. Since Malaysia's independence, female scholars have been actively participating in the public square through lectures delivered at mosques and private events as well as via broadcast and social media.[316] Women in today's Central Asian countries of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan have homeschooling networks for religious education and provide other communal leadership services informally.[317] Some female scholars from this time include Zayn al-Sharaf (d. 1672), Quraysh al-Tabariyyah (d. 1696), and

Fatima bint Hamad al-Fudayli (d. 1831), all three from Makkah; Khunathah al-Ma'afiri (d. 1746); Nana Asmau (d. 1864) of Sokoto Caliphate; the Indian Shams-un-Nisa (d.1887); Lihaz-un-Nisa (d. 1888); Amatullah al-Dihlawiyya (d. 1938); the Egyptians 'A'isha Abd al-Rahman, aka Bint al-Shati' (d. 1988) and Zaynab al-Ghazali (d. 2005), Noor Jahan Thanwi (d. 2017), as well as Munira al-Qubaysi (d. 2022). The treatment of women in Islam became a dominant theme in modern times which continues till today, leading to both modernists highlighting women's rights in Islam as well as the emergence of feminist interpretations of the Qur'an critiquing patriarchal tendencies in Islamic scholarship.[318]

Muslim reformers and activists were inevitably influenced by the seemingly sophisticated Orientalist scholarly currents that cast suspicions on the core science of *hadith.*[319] Central to the argument among Muslim modernists – reflective of the Mu'tazili approach – was an emphasis on the fixedness and authority of the Qur'an over and above the Prophetic *Sunnah,* which was not only discounted but also suspected of rampant forgery and external intrusion.[320] While some advocated a "Qur'an-only" methodology, others, such as Sayyid Ahmad Khan (d. 1898), Abduh, Rida, and Fazlur Rahman (d. 1988), accepted the Prophetic *Sunnah* but disregarded traditional scholarship, critiquing prior *hadith* criticism techniques as insufficient.[321] Unlike the efforts of the classical scholars who had endeavored to establish authenticity based on *isnad* (transmission), modernists increasingly undertook *matn* (content) criticism and, countering established scholarly consensus spanning centuries, declared only *mutawatir* (massively transmitted) *hadith*s as possessing certainty whereas dismissing the single-transmission (*ahad*) reports as yielding only probable knowledge.[322] In effect, since such *mutawatir hadith*s are only a handful, they basically disavowed the vast majority of what has been passed down as *Sunnah.*[323] On the jurisprudence side, Ibn 'Ashur (d. 1973) strove to revive al-Shatibi's *maqasid al-Shari'ah* approach in an effort to renew *usul al-fiqh* (legal theory).

On the other hand, some groups, like the followers of Ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, 'Abd al-Aziz ibn Baz (d. 1999) and Muhammad bin Salih al-'Uthaymin (d. 2001), along with al-Albani (d. 1999), saw *hadith*s as the "ultimate source of interpreting the faith" and revived *hadith* criticism, seeking to purge

the body of prophetic traditions of weak reports.[324] Known as Salafis, they echo the early *Ahl al-Hadith* in centering the *Sunnah*.[325] Although Ibn ʿAbd al-Wahhab was not against *madhahib* per se, al-Albani did not believe in following any legal schools as they had come to exist.[326] He found them to be rigid and felt they demanded uncritical adherence, so much so that he parted from his Hanafi father and left his home due to such differences.[327] Like the modernists, the Salafi al-Albani wanted to wrest control from layers upon layers of *'ulama'* (*al-khassa*), who in his opinion had corrupted the original scriptural teachings as encompassed in the Qur'an and *Sunnah*.[328] A self-taught man, he prided himself on breaking free from the scholarly chain and being a direct follower of the Prophet Muhammad (s), something which led him to detach himself from the Wahhabi Salafis as well.[329] Nonetheless, al-Albani honored the founding members of the four schools of law as *imam*s who were part of the first three generations of Muslims; however, he accused the followers of the *madhahib* of *taqlid*.[330] Instead, he foregrounded the Qur'an and *Sunnah* and asserted that his scriptural understanding was the "absolute truth," feigning to remove himself from the interpretive process.[331] In his quest for certainty, he tried to minimize differences and castigated the scholars of *madhahib* for plurality in legal rulings, especially the existence of contradictory opinions.[332] In that vein, he encouraged his students and Muslims in general to demand textual proofs for scholarly rulings and gave lay people (*al-'amma*) the confidence to gain knowledge of *hadith*s, whereas previously this was the domain of the scholarly class (*al-khassa*).[333] Al-Albani became renowned across the Muslim world and, like scholars before him, his teachings spread through his works and his students who recorded his lectures.[334]

Critics of al-Albani upbraided him for bypassing centuries of traditional scholarship and disparaged his literalistic interpretations that narrowly focused on *hadith* to the exclusion of *fiqh*.[335] Refuting both the Salafis and modernist scholars were the postclassical traditionalists, who continued to revere the intellectual legacy of Muslims as received through the ages. They celebrated legal pluralism and subjective interpretation as a crucial aspect of Islamic law, recognizing that legal reasoning, whether through *ijtihad* or *taqlid*, was a fallible process; they argued that the spectra of views "help remove hardship" and "accommodate different societal

and individual needs."[336] In doing so, these scholars adapted to the needs of modern times by allowing movement across legal schools for flexibility in opinions, restored Malik's inclination for following communal practice in matters where *hadith*s existed but were never acted upon by the Prophet (s),[337] and accepted figurative interpretations.[338] They also began giving textual proofs for their rulings and adopted al-Albani's practice of indicating the grading of a *hadith* when citing it.[339] Nevertheless, they continued to censure modernist and Salafi efforts as haphazard, underscoring the necessity of juristic training in order to conduct *hadith* criticism.[340] Proponents of the postclassical traditionalist approach included al-Kawthari (d. 1952), ʿAbd al-Fattah Abu Ghudda (d. 1997), and Saʿid al-Buti (d. 2013). Contemporary modernist Islamic scholars inspired by Rida were Muhammad al-Ghazali (d. 1996) and Yusuf al-Qaradawi (d. 2022); while their approach was similar to traditionalists in that they respected received knowledge through chains of scholars, their interpretive processes were more flexible and liberal.[341] Other Salafi autodidacts were ʿAbd al-Qadir al-Arnaʾut (d. 2004) and ʿAli al-Halabi (d. 2020).

Conclusion

In the end, a crucial question to ask is: What is the relevance and utility of inherited tradition in today's time and space? In a world where the legalistic-extremist-bad Muslim versus Sufistic-peaceful-good Muslim trope[342] is actively endorsed, with no dearth of scholars reducing the complexity, richness, and diversity of Islamic thought to one-dimensional stereotypes and simplistic depictions of an obsession with the past, it is vital to educate ourselves of the full scope of our scholarly heritage in order to engage our intellectual history with both measured reverence and constructive criticism. This is all the more important because Muslims today are especially susceptible to internalized Islamophobia, due to the constant onslaught of dominant Islamophobic narratives that single out Islam as well as its scholarly tradition as exceptionally problematic and seek to undermine key figures in Muslim intellectual history.[343] Moreover, as Muslims struggle to find their place in the contemporary world, it may be comforting to know that striking the right

balance between Qur'an and *Sunnah* is not just a core concern for us but has been a salient inspiration among scholars for centuries.

It is also crucial to realize that in spite of the many disputations, there was much in common among the various groups, ensuring a plurality and multivocality that allowed each to carve out and inhabit a niche, coexisting and enriching Islamic thought as a whole. May we appreciate the hard work which has preceded us and acknowledge the great debt we owe the giants who have erected the lampposts that continue to guide us today. Above all, my hope is that having a sense of the larger picture will allow students of Islam in general and Islamic Studies in particular to delve deeper, ask probing questions, and make important connections during the individual study of each discipline and topic, enabling us to inch closer to the ultimate goal as encountered by every generation in these 1400 years: how best to lead our lives in accordance with the will of God and the example of the Prophet Muhammad (s).

The map and timeline accompanying the present survey of Muslim intellectual history are available at this link: *https://www.ajis.org/index.php/ajiss/libraryFiles/downloadPublic/4* and QR code.

Endnotes

1 To determine the Gregorian equivalent, here is a good formula: CE = 0.970229 × AH + 621.5643. For conversion from CE to *hijri* year, use the following formula: AH = 1.030684 × (CE – 621.5643).

2 While the early "scholars" were known as '*fuqaha*' and '*ulama*,' these were loosely applied terms and did not signify the technical meaning they came to carry with the systematization of Islamic scholarship. Calling them "memorizers, collectors, and exemplars," Ovamir Anjum explains that they were "trustworthy receptacles of the Companions' teachings and judgments, and they were sages—wise men and women—who embodied that knowledge and advised others, answering people's questions that arose out of the day-to-day practice of Qur'an and the known Sunna" (*A History of Islam in Action: The Umayyad Period 40-132/661-750*, Ch. 8, unpublished manuscript).

3 To see an *isnad* of an *ijaza* (certification) in Qur'anic recitation spanning 14 centuries, for instance, see Figure 3.1 in Ingrid Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an* (Chichester, West Sussex: Blackwell, 2013).

4 *Isnad* is the "chain of transmission through which a scholar traced the *matn*, or text, of a hadith back to the Prophet … an effort to document that a hadith had actually come from Muhammad." Jonathan Brown, *Hadith: Muhammad's Legacy in the Medieval and Modern World* (Oxford: OneWorld, 2018), 4.

5 *Hadith* is a "report describing the words, actions, or habits of the Prophet" and serves as the "unit through which the Sunna was preserved, transmitted, and understood" (Ibid., 3).

6 For more details on how oral and written transmission took place across the disciplines, see Brown, *Hadith*, 44ff; Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an*, Ch. 3; Ahmed El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law: A Social and Intellectual History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), Ch. 6; Asma Sayeed, *Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 123-125 and Ch. 4, and Sean Anthony, *The Expeditions: An Early Biography of Muhammad by Ma'mar ibn Rashid* (New York: New York University Press, 2015), xxii-xxiii and xxviii-xxxi. See also Gregor Schoeler and Shawkat Toorawa, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam: From the Aural to the Read* (Revised edition, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009).

7 Hussein Abdul-Raof, *Schools of Qur'anic Exegesis: Genesis and Development* (New York: Routledge, 2010).

8 "School" here refers to tendency in approach towards Islam and not the legal schools (*madhahib*; sing. *madhhab*) that were formalized much later, in the fourth century AH.

9 Abdul-Raof, *Schools of Qur'anic Exegesis*.

10 *Sunnah* is the "normative legacy of the Prophet … and, although it stands second to the Quran in terms of reverence, it is the lens through which the holy book is interpreted and understood" (Brown, *Hadith*, 3).

11 Schoeler and Toorawa, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam.*

12 Brown, *Hadith.*

13 Yasin Dutton, *Early Islam in Medina: Malik and His Muwatta* (London: Bloomsbury, 2022).

14 Anjum, *A History of Islam in Action.*

15 Brown, *Hadith*; El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law.*

16 Anjum, *A History of Islam in Action.*

17 Ibid.

18 Mohammad Akram Nadwi, *al-Muhaddithat: The Women Scholars in Islam* (Oxford: Interface Publications, 2014). Nadwi notes that *hadith* scholarship among women waned in Syria after the first *hijri* century but revived again in the sixth century AH. Shaykh Akram Nadwi's 43-volume biographical compilation of female *hadith* scholars is now available in Arabic: *al-Wafa' bi asma' an-Nisa'* (Jeddah: Dar al-Minhaj, 2021).

19 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law.*

20 Anthony, *The Expeditions.*

21 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law.* Schoeler and Toorawa in chapter 4 of *The Genesis of Literature in Islam* also explain that the early texts were written for the court, where they were stored in the royal library.

22 Dutton, *Early Islam in Medina.*

23 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law.*

24 Nimrod Hurvitz, *Formation of Hanbalism: Piety into Power* (New York: Routledge, 2011).

25 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*; Hurvitz, *Formation of Hanbalism.*

26 Nadwi, *al-Muhaddithat.*

27 Sayeed, *Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam.*

28 Nadwi, *al-Muhaddithat.*

29 Anjum, *A History of Islam in Action.*

30 Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 *Qadar* (divine predestination) is one of the articles of faith and indicates Muslim belief in God's ultimate and complete power. The Umayyads politicized this core concept to justify their political ends and the suffering endured by the community during their rule. By "attributing their licentiousness and iniquities to qadar," Umayyad rulers and governors sought to "gag the opposition, exonerate the unscrupulous rulers and justify their political misfortunes" (Abdul-Raof, *Schools of Qur'anic Exegesis*, 57). In other words, the Umayyads asserted that to reject them was to deny God's plan (Anjum, *A History of Islam in Action*).

33 Anjum adds the following caveat: "The other implication of the doctrine of deferment was that actions were not part of the definition of faith. The two types of deferment (*irjā'*) are often distinguished by the Sunni traditionalists" (*A History of Islam in Action*, Ch. 8).

34 Ibid.

35 Ibid., Ch. 8.

36 Ibid.

37 Malika Zeghal and Marilyn Waldman, "Islamic World" (*Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2019). https://www.britannica.com/topic/Islamic-world.

38 Ibid.

39 Anjum, *A History of Islam in Action*.

40 Brown, *Hadith*.

41 Ibid.

42 Christopher Melchert, "Ahmad ibn Hanbal and the Qur'an," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 6, no. 2 (2004): 22–34.

43 Brown, *Hadith*.

44 The inscribed Qur'an in the form of *sahifa*s (loose pages) – as meticulously verified by the chief scribe, Zayd ibn Thabit, and his team – was safely kept by Abu Bakr (ra, d. 13), then 'Umar (d. 23), and then Hafsa (ra, d. 45). During the caliphate of 'Uthman, a final codex was compiled as a *mushaf* (collection of pages) and circulated as the official written Qur'an. For a detailed discussion of how the Qur'an was compiled and finalized, see Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an*, p. 95-100. See also Yasin Dutton, "The Form of the Qur'an: Historical Contours" in *The Oxford Handbook of Qur'anic Studies*, ed. Mustafa Shah and Muhammad Abdel Haleem (London: Oxford University Press, 2020) regarding companions' written copies of the Qur'an which differed from one another and variant readings (*qira'at*).

45 Brown, *Hadith*. Brown explains that only a few companions wrote down some of his sayings as private notes.

46 Ibid.

47 See Abdul-Raof, *Schools of Qur'anic Exegesis*, Ch. 3; Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an*, 192-3, and Hurvitz, *Formation of Hanbalism*, Ch. 8.

48 Jonathan Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhari and Muslim: The Formation and Function of the Sunni Hadith Canon* (Boston: Brill, 2007), 57.

49 Brown, *Hadith*.

50 For details, see Zainab Alwani, "Muslim Women as Religious Scholars: A Historical Survey," in *Wiener Islamstudien, Volume 3: Muslima Theology: The Voices of Muslim Women Theologians*, eds. Ednan Aslan, Marcia Hermansen, and Elid Medeni (Frankfurt am Main, DEU: Peter Lang AG, 2013).

51 Brown, *Hadith*.

52 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*.

53 For a detailed study of his life and work, see Feryal Salem, *The Emergence of Early Sufi Piety and Sunni Scholasticism: ʿAbdallāh b. al-Mubārak and the Formation of Sunni Identity in the Second Islamic Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

54 Brown, *Hadith*, 80.

55 Nadwi, *al-Muhaddithat*.

56 Sayeed, *Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam*, 3.

57 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*.

58 Martin Nguyen, *Modern Muslim Theology: Engaging God and the World with Faith and Imagination* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019).

59 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*.

60 Ibid., 37.

61 Dutton, *Early Islam in Medina*, 39.

62 Ibid., 64. See also chapter 4.

63 Kecia Ali, *Imam Shafiʿi: Scholar and Saint* (Oxford: Oneworld, 2011).

64 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid.

68 Ibid.

69 More than the locations of battles or raids, Anthony explains in *The Expeditions* (2015) that the term "*maghazi*" here refers to "sites of sacred memory… A *maghzah*, therefore, is also a place where any memorable event transpired and, by extension, the *maghazi* genre distills all the events and stories of sacred history that left their mark on the collective memory of Muhammad's community of believers" (xix-xx).

70 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*, 96. Any references here to Maliki or Hanafi are used informally to identify the respective followers of Malik ibn Anas and Abu Hanifa, not their legal schools which were formalized in the fourth century. See Dutton, *Early Islam in Medina*, Ch. 5, for an exchange between Malik and al-Layth ibn Saʿd (d. 175) regarding Malik's objection that al-Layth's *fatwa*s in Egypt were running counter to Madinan *ʿamal*.

71 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*.

72 This entailed that an Arab patron would give protection to a non-Arab, his client. Both patron and client were called *mawla* (pl. *mawali*). Anjum in *A History of Islam in Action* explains that at first Muslim and Arab were synonymous terms but by the end of the 1st century, a significant number of non-Arabs had become Muslim.

In terms of *'ulama*, he notes that in the 1st century, Arab *'ulama* outnumbered non-Arab *'ulama*. In the 2nd century, non-Arab *'ulama* equaled Arab *'ulama*. In the 3rd century, non-Arab *'ulama* outnumbered Arab *'ulama*. By the 4th century, the distinction between non-Arab and Arab lost any importance.

73 For more details, see El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*, 100-103. The patron-client relationship was common during the Ottoman Empire as well. For a detailed overview of how Bosnian Muslims resourcefully integrated themselves in the contemporary educational elite circles, see Ayelet Zoran-Rosen, "The Emergence of a Bosnian Learned Elite: A Case of Ottoman Imperial Integration," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 30, no. 2 (2019): 176-204.

74 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*.

75 Ibid. El Shamsy also remarks, "al-Shafi'i most probably adopted the justification of prophetic tradition as evidence of divine intention from the Hanafis in Iraq" (78) who had utilized this argument in a debate with Kharijis when the latter refused to accept *hadith* in interpreting Qur'anic verses.

76 Wael Hallaq notes the following about another potential school: "The Zahirite school, by contrast, which remained steadfast in its literalist/traditionalist stand and adamantly refused to join this synthesis, was left behind and before long expired." Hallaq, *The Origins and Evolution of Islamic Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

77 This science was refined in the next few centuries: legal acts were categorized as obligatory (*fard*/*wajib*), recommended (*mandub*), permissible (*mubah*), prohibited (*haram*), and repugnant (*makruh*); acts were further distinguished based on whether they were valid (*sahih*), invalid (*fasih*), or null and void (*batil*); explication of imperative and prohibitive forms; the distinction between recurrent (*mutawatir*) reports that are similar in wording (*lafzi*) and those that differ in wording but share the same meaning (*ma'nawi*); the delineation of attributes that *hadith* transmitters must possess as required by jurists, such as justice (*'adl*), truthfulness (*sadiq*), precision (*dabt*), etc.; criteria based on which reports are evaluated and given preference (*tarjih*); rules of abrogation (*naskh*); how and when consensus (*ijma'*) may be reached or reasoning (*qiyas*/*ijtihad*) may be employed, and *maqasid al-Shari'ah* (the higher objectives of Shari'ah), among others. For detailed treatment of *usul al-fiqh*, see Wael Hallaq, *A History of Islamic Legal Theories: An Introduction to Sunnī Uṣūl al-Fiqh* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

78 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*, 116.

79 Ibid.

80 Hurvitz, *Formation of Hanbalism*.

81 Ibn Hanbal's followers, including his son 'Abdullah (d. 290), would serve as judges for the court. Ibid.

82 The House of Wisdom began as a library of manuscripts on a host of subjects in the arts and sciences in many languages; it was later expanded as a research center where scholars engaged in translations, analyses, discussions, and production of

literary works. Salim Al-Hassani, *1001 Inventions: The Enduring Legacy of Muslim Civilization* (Washington, D.C.: National Geographic, 2012).

83 Hurvitz, *Formation of Hanbalism*.

84 Wasil ibn ʿAta (d. 131) of Basra is considered to be the founder of the Muʿtazilis. For more details on the Mu'tazilis, see Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an*, 143-6; El-Tobgui, *Ibn Taymiyya on Reason and Revelation*, 41-42, and Blankinship, "The Early Creed," in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*, ed. Tim Winter (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 47-51.

85 That is, "an argument for the existence of God which claims that all things in nature depend on something else for their existence (i.e. are contingent), and that the whole cosmos must therefore itself depend on a being which exists independently or necessarily" (Oxford Languages).

86 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*.

87 Hurvitz clarifies that there were Sunni *mutakallimun* as well as Hanafis who opposed the *mihna*. Sunni *mutakallimun* were those scholars who opposed the Muʿtazili positions but did not reject *kalam* altogether. Hurvitz also asserts that the *mihna* was meant to "advance the collective interests of all *mutakallimun*," not just the Muʿtazilis (*Formation of Hanbalism*, 129).

88 Hurvitz, *Formation of Hanbalism*.

89 Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an*. She adds, "the mihna had the long-term effect of strengthening the social profile of the scholarly class, who henceforth tried to assert their independence from political rulers to judge on matters of religious law and belief, while simultaneously calling upon the power of the state from time to time to enforce the orthodoxy they delineated" (145).

90 Ibid., 152.

91 See note 87.

92 Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhari and Muslim*, 77.

93 Hurvitz, *Formation of Hanbalism*; for detailed discussion, see 152-155. *Jahmis* were followers of Jahm ibn Safwan (d. 128); this term was used pejoratively by Hanbalis to indicate Muʿtazili tendencies among peers. Jahm ibn Safwan had questionable beliefs such as "faith is merely an internalized knowledge in the heart, without any outward expression at all" along with "the view that heaven and hell are not eternal" (Blankinship, "The Early Creed," 44).

94 Hurvitz, *Formation of Hanbalism*.

95 Blankinship, "The Early Creed." Sajjad Rizvi discusses the Muʿtazili influence on Shiʿa theology in Oliver Leaman and Sajjad Rizvi, "The Developed *Kalam* Tradition," in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*, 92-94.

96 Brown, *Hadith*, 80.

97 Hallaq, *The Origins and Evolution of Islamic Law*.

98 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law.*

99 Ibid., 157.

100 Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhari and Muslim.*

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid.

103 Ibid., 58. Brown explains, "Since the early days of Islam, the transmission of hadiths was a means for everyday Muslims to bind themselves to the inspirational authority of the Prophet and incorporate his charisma into their lives. Like all early Muslim scholarship, the collection and study of hadiths was not the product of institutions of learning; it was undertaken by devout individuals whose eventual knowledge and pious allure earned them positions of respect and authority in their communities" (57).

104 Sayeed, *Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam.*

105 Ibid., 103.

106 Nadwi, *al-Muhaddithat.* For detailed descriptions, see 44-46, 98-102, and 142-149.

107 Ibid.

108 Sayeed, *Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam.*

109 Nadwi, *al-Muhaddithat.*

110 Ibid.

111 Ibid.

112 Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhari and Muslim.* Brown mentions that al-Daraqutni (d. 385) and al-Harawi (d. 430) each compiled *hadith* collections that they considered *sahih* which they believed should've been included by al-Bukhari and Muslim.

113 Joel Blecher, "Hadith commentary," in *Encyclopedia of Islam, Third Edition*, ed. Kate Fleet, Gudrun Krämer, Denis Matringe, John Nawas, and Everett Rowson.

114 Ibid.

115 Ibid.

116 Ibid.

117 Brown, *Hadith.*

118 Ibid.

119 Ibid.

120 Ibid. Brown notes, "The *Sahihayn* canon was an ideal polemical weapon to use against one's opponents. But that did not mean that scholars felt they had to obey all the hadiths found in the two collections in their own work. If a scholar of the Shafi'i or Hanafi school of law found a hadith in al-Bukhari's or Muslim's collections that he disagreed with, he had no compunction about criticizing its authenticity.

... Only in the early modern and modern periods has it become controversial to criticize the *Sahihayn*, but this is primarily due to Muslim scholars' eagerness to protect the status of two books that they see as symbols of an Islamic tradition under attack from modernity" (41-2).

121 Some scholars have considered this to be the 'closing of the gate of *ijtihad* (independent reasoning based on revelatory sources).' However, Hallaq forcefully opposes this view in Wael Hallaq, "Was the Gate of *Ijtihad* Closed?" *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 16, no. 1 (1984): 3–41.

122 Abdul-Raof, *Schools of Qur'anic Exegesis*.

123 Ibid.

124 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*.

125 Ibid.

126 Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhari and Muslim*.

127 Ibid.

128 Brown, *Hadith*.

129 Abdul-Raof, *Schools of Qur'anic Exegesis*.

130 For detailed treatment of the interaction between *hadith* and *tafsir*, see R. Marston Speight, "The Function of Hadith as Commentary on the Qur'an, as Seen in the Six Authoritative Collections," in *Approaches to the History of the Interpretation of the Qur'ān*, ed. Andrew Rippin (Piscataway, NJ, USA: Gorgias Press, 2013).

131 Abdul-Raof, *Schools of Qur'anic Exegesis*.

132 Ibid. See also, Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an*.

133 This refers to the method that utilizes verse(s) from one part of the Qur'an to explain another verse(s).

134 Abdul-Raof, *Schools of Qur'anic Exegesis*.

135 Ibid.

136 Ibid.

137 Schoeler and Toorawa, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam*.

138 C.H.M. Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar and Quranic Exegesis in Early Islam* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1993).

139 Al-Du'ali also added markings to indicate short vowels and double consonants while the dots and diacritical marks were added later. Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an*.

140 Michael Carter, *Sibawayhi* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2004). Other prominent grammarians in subsequent generations include al-Farra (d. 207), Ibn Qutaybah (d. 276), and al-Sarraj (d. 316). Ibn Qutaybah was also a prolific writer of moralistic books on a variety of topics. See Schoeler and Toorawa, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam*, 103-4, where they also mention the Mu'tazili al-Jahiz (d. 255) who reportedly wrote over 200 books on a wide range of subjects.

141 For a detailed treatment of this, see Versteegh, *Arabic Grammar and Qur'anic Exegesis*, and S.R. Burge, *The Meaning of the Word: Lexicology and Qur'anic Exegesis* (London: Oxford University Press, 2015).

142 Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an.*

143 Walid Saleh, "Hermeneutics: al-Ṯaʿlabi," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to the Qur'an*, ed. Andrew Rippin and Jawid Mojaddedi (Chichester, UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2017).

144 Abdul-Raof, *Schools of Qur'anic Exegesis.*

145 Ibid.

146 Mattson, *The Story of the Qur'an.*

147 Brown, *Hadith.*

148 Andrew Rippin, "Tafsir," in *Encyclopedia of Islam, Second Edition*, ed. P. Bearman, Th. Bianquis, C.E. Bosworth, E. van Donzel, and W.P. Heinrichs.

149 Ibid.

150 Abdul-Raof, *Schools of Qur'anic Exegesis.*

151 Walid Saleh, "Hermeneutics: al-Ṯaʿlabi."

152 Walid Saleh, *The Formation of the Classical Tafsir Tradition: The Qur'an Commentary of al-Thaʿlabi* (Leiden: Brill, 2004).

153 Walid Saleh, "Medieval Exegesis: The Golden Age of *Tafsir*," in *The Oxford Handbook of Qur'anic Studies.*

154 Walid Saleh, "Preliminary Remarks on the Historiography of *Tafsir* in Arabic: A History of the Book Approach," *Journal of Qur'anic Studies* 12 (2010): 6-40. See also Rippin, "Tafsir," *EI2.*

155 Here we see the distinct shifts in writing that took place in the second and third centuries: from being a mneumonic device (lecture notes) to writing as a mode of expression (Malik's *al-Muwatta*), it eventually took on the specific purposes of developing, systematizing, and spreading of ideas (al-Shafiʿi's works and onwards).

156 El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law.*

157 Saleh, "Preliminary Remarks." Rippin explains that though Zamakhsahri's *tafsir* is "renowned for its Mu'tazili perspective," it is "distinctive primarily for its special outlook and not for the presence of an overall theological argument per se, nor for the quantity of such argumentation." ("Tafsir," *EI2.*)

158 Younus Mirza, "Ishmael as Abraham's Sacrifice: Ibn Taymiyya and Ibn Kathir on the Intended Victim," *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 24, no. 3 (2013): 277–298.

159 Younus Mirza, "Ibn Kathīr, ʿImād al-Dīn," *EI3.*

160 Saleh, "Preliminary Remarks." For a detailed treatment of this, see Ahmed El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics: How Editors and Print Culture Transformed an Intellectual Tradition* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2020).

161 Mirza, "Ibn Kathīr, ʿImād al-Dīn," *EI3*.

162 Rippin, "Tafsir," *EI2*.

163 Ibid.

164 Brown, *The Canonization of al-Bukhari and Muslim*.

165 Khalid Blankinship, "The Early Creed."

166 Nguyen, *Modern Muslim Theology*, 127.

167 Khalid Blankinship, "The Early Creed."

168 Nader El-Bizri, "God: Essence and Attributes," in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*.

169 Tilman Nagel, *The History of Islamic Theology from Muhammad to the Present* (Princeton, NJ: Markus Weiner Publishers, 2000).

170 Martin Nguyen, *Modern Muslim Theology*.

171 Khalid Blankinship, "The Early Creed," 53.

172 Ibid.

173 Ibid. See also Nader El-Bizri, "God: Essence and Attributes."

174 Martin Nguyen, *Modern Muslim Theology*.

175 Peter Adamson, "al-Kindi," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2020 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2020/entries/al-kindi/. See also, Carl Sharif El-Tobgui, *Ibn Taymiyya on Reason and Revelation: A Study of Dar' taʿāruḍ al-ʿaql wa-l-naql* (Leidin; Boston: Brill, 2020), 55-57.

176 El-Tobgui, *Ibn Taymiyya on Reason and Revelation*, 57-60.

177 Ibid.

178 Ibid.

179 Robert Wisnovsky, "Avicenna and the Avicennian Tradition" in *The Cambridge Companion to Arabic Philosophy*, ed. Peter Adamson and Richard C. Taylor (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 92.

180 El-Tobgui, *Ibn Taymiyya on Reason and Revelation*, 61.

181 Ibid.

182 Ayman Shehadeh, *Doubts on Avicenna: A Study and Edition of Sharaf al-Din al-Masudi's Commentary on the Isharat* (Leiden: Brill, 2016).

183 El-Tobgui, *Ibn Taymiyya on Reason and Revelation*. For more details, see 60ff.

184 Ibid.

185 Toby Mayer, "Theology and Sufism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*.

186 Al-Ghazali also wrote a treatise refuting Ismaili Shiʿas, another faction gaining strength at the time.

187 In fact, his expository work on *falsafa*, *Aims of the Philosophers*, translated into Latin and Hebrew, was misinterpreted as a treatise advocating philosophy and widely circulated. See Frank Griffel, "al-Ghazali," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2020 Edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2020/entries/al-ghazali/.

188 Ibid. This last point is connected to Ibn Sina's conception of God as passively and generally aware of His creation.

189 Ibid.

190 El-Tobgui, *Ibn Taymiyya on Reason and Revelation.*

191 Montgomery Watt, "al-Ghazali," in *EI2.*

192 El-Tobgui, *Ibn Taymiyya on Reason and Revelation.*

193 Hossein Ziai, "Islamic Philosophy (*falsafa*)," in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology.*

194 When a *hadith* is "transmitted by such a vast number of people in so many different places that it is impossible to imagine that anyone could have made it up or conspired to forge it," it is called *mutawatir*. Brown, *Hadith*, 191.

195 Sherman Jackson, *On the Boundaries of Theological Tolerance in Islam: Abū Ḥāmid Al-Ghāzalī's Fayṣal Al-Tafriqa Bayna al-Islam wa al-Zandaqa* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2002).

196 This transformation of al-Ghazali is well-recorded. David Burrell, "Creation," in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*, relates it in al-Ghazali's own words.

197 Ibid.

198 Mayer, "Theology and Sufism," 270.

199 W. Montgomery Watt, *Muslim Intellectual: A Study of Al-Ghazali* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1971). https://www.ghazali.org/articles/watt.htm.

200 Mayer, "Theology and Sufism."

201 Ahmet Karamustafa, "Sufism," in *Voices of Islam, Volume 1, Voices of Tradition*, ed. Vincent J. Cornell (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2007). Reproduced in *Muhammad in History, Thought and Culture: An Encyclopedia of the Prophet of God* (ABC-CLIO/Praeger, 2014).

202 Ibid.

203 Ibid.

204 Ibid.

205 Devin DeWeese, "Organizational Patterns and Developments within Sufi Communities," in *The Wiley-Blackwell History of Islam*, ed. Armando Salvatore (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2018).

206 Ahmet Karamustafa, "Antinomian Sufis," in *The Cambridge Companion to Sufism*, ed. Lloyd Ridgeon (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

207 Ibid.

208 Brown, *Hadith*.

209 Karamustafa, "Sufism."

210 Sayeed, *Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam*.

211 Karamustafa, "Sufism."

212 Sayeed, *Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam*.

213 Ibid.

214 See Watt, *Muslim Intellectual*, The Crisis of 1095.

215 Karamustafa, "Sufism."

216 DeWeese, "Organizational Patterns and Developments within Sufi Communities."

217 Karamustafa, "Sufism."

218 SherAli Tareen, *Defending Muḥammad in Modernity* (Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020), 19.

219 Karamustafa, "Antinomian Sufis."

220 Ibid.

221 Karamustafa, "Sufism."

222 Ibid.

223 This is a common Sufi view that the *awliya'*, those who have reached the highest *maqam* in the Sufi hierarchy, receive divine inspiration (*ilham*). For instance, it is said that Rumi (d. 672), the renowned Sufi master and poet, was inspired to recite his *Mathnawi*. See Jawid Mojaddedi, "Rumi," in *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to the Qur'an*.

224 Franz Rosenthal, "Ibn Arabi Between 'Philosophy' and 'Mysticism': 'Sufism and Philosophy Are Neighbors and Visit Each Other'" *Oriens* 31, no. 1 (1988): 1–35, at 34.

225 Caner Dagli, *Ibn Al-Arabi and Islamic Intellectual Culture: From Mysticism to Philosophy* (Florence: Routledge, 2016), 52. Dagli adds, "It was Ibn al-Arabi who demonstrated that a mystical point of view could have something to say about all the areas touched on by *falsafah* and *kalam*, and in fact claimed that only through a system that took as its pinnacle the direct encounter between man and God could rational thinking assume its proper place in human knowledge" (52).

226 Mayer, "Theology and Sufism."

227 Rosenthal, "Ibn Arabi Between 'Philosophy' and 'Mysticism.'"

228 Dagli, *Ibn Al-Arabi and Islamic Intellectual Culture*, 52.

229 Dagli argues that Ibn al-Arabi never used this phrase in his writings and it was developed as a concept by successive generations of scholars belonging to the "school of Ibn al-Arabi." For detailed discussion, see Dagli, *Ibn Al-Arabi and Islamic Intellectual Culture*, chapter 2.

230 A. Ateş, "Ibn al-Arabi," *EI2*.

231 Mayer, "Theology and Sufism." Mayer notes that when distinguished Sufis like Simnani (d. 736) and al-Sirhindi (d. 1624) refuted Ibn al-Arabi, they did so by formulating "intricate speculative responses of their own, not by reverting to the pre-speculative Sufism of the classical period, as represented, say, by Ghazali's *Revival*" (275).

232 Dagli, *Ibn Al-Arabi and Islamic Intellectual Culture*, 49.

233 Tim Winter, "Introduction," in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*.

234 Brown, *Hadith*, 58.

235 Ibid.

236 Schoeler and Toorawa, *The Genesis of Literature in Islam*.

237 Ibid.

238 Sayeed, *Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam*.

239 Ibid. See 175-177 for details on how *ijaza*s were often granted to children in the hopes of maintaining the linkages between the old and the young for the sake of transmission.

240 Ibid.

241 Ibid.

242 It should be noted that campaigns and expeditions continued with various dynasties fighting one another for control. External threats such as the Mongols and Crusaders also existed. In the course of Muslim intellectual history, many scholars participated in *jihad*, such as al-Hasan al-Basri, Abdullah ibn Mubarak, Ibn Taymiyya, and Ibn Khaldun, among others.

243 El-Tobgui, *Ibn Taymiyya on Reason and Revelation*. An earlier history of Damascus was written by the historian Ibn ʿAsakir (d. 538).

244 For a timeline of the reason versus revelation debate in Muslim intellectual history leading up to Ibn Taymiyya, see Ibid., 39-40.

245 Ibid.

246 Ibid., 92.

247 Ibid., 93.

248 Ibid. This refers to al-Ghazali's crisis and turn towards mysticism. However, there is no evidence that al-Ghazali ever abandoned his Ashʿari orientation.

249 Ibid.

250 This refers to the authentic and *mutawatir hadith*: "The best of people are my generation, then those who follow them, and then those who follow them" (*Sahih Muslim*).

251 El-Tobgui, *Ibn Taymiyya on Reason and Revelation*.

252 Ibid.

253 Ibid.

254 See Younus Mirza, "Ibn Kathir (d. 774/1373): His Intellectual Circle, Major Works and Qur'anic Exegesis" (PhD thesis, 2012), for a detailed description of the richly diverse Damascus scene and the interactions between the elite Shafiʿi Ashʿaris, their traditionalist Shafiʿi counterparts, along with Ibn Taymiyya and his circle.

255 Khaled El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century: Scholarly Currents in the Ottoman Empire and the Maghreb* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

256 Oliver Leaman, "The Developed *Kalam* Tradition," in *The Cambridge Companion to Classical Islamic Theology*.

257 Ibid., 86.

258 Hallaq, *A History of Islamic Legal Theories*.

259 Ebrahim Moosa and SherAli Tareen, "Revival and Reform," in *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Islamic Political Thought*, ed. Gerhard Bowering, Patricia Crone, Wadad Kadi, Devin J. Stewart, Muhammad Qasim Zaman, and Mahan Mirza (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012).

260 Hallaq, *A History of Islamic Legal Theories*.

261 El-Rouayheb, *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*. El-Rouayheb particularly emphasizes that, contrary to popular narratives of intellectual decline, there was a thriving scholarly culture in the seventeenth century across the Ottoman Empire.

262 Bruce Masters, *The Arabs of the Ottoman Empire, 1516–1918: A Social and Cultural History* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

263 El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics*.

264 Sayeed, *Women and the Transmission of Religious Knowledge in Islam*.

265 Ibid.

266 Ousmane Kane, *Beyond Timbuktu: An Intellectual History of Muslim West Africa* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2016), 8.

267 Ibid.

268 Ibid.

269 For more details on female scholarly and spiritual networks in West Africa, see Britta Frede, "Following in the Steps of ʿA'isha: Hassaniyya-Speaking Tijani Women as Spiritual Guides (Muqaddamat) and Teaching Islamic Scholars (Limrabutat) in Mauritania," *Islamic Africa* 5, no. 2 (2014): 225–73; Joseph Hill, *Wrapping Authority: Women Islamic Leaders in a Sufi Movement in Dakar, Senegal*. (Toronto, London: Toronto University Press, 2018).

270 Valerie Hoffman, "East Africa," in *The Islamic World Routledge Handbook*, ed. Andrew Rippin (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008).

271 Camilla Gibb, "Negotiating Social and Spiritual Worlds: The Gender of Sanctity in a Muslim City in Africa," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 16, no. 2 (2000): 25–42.

272 Edward A. Alpers and Anne K. Bang, "East Africa", *EI3*.

273 Ibid.

274 Hoffman, "East Africa."

275 Ahmad Yousif, "Contemporary Islamic Movements in Southeast Asia: Challenges and Opportunities," in *The Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Islamic Thought*, ed. Ibrahim Abu-Rabi' (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2006), 449–465.

276 Leonard Andaya, "The Introduction, Spread, and Circulation of Islam up to the Early Colonial Period in Southeast Asia," in *Routledge Handbook of Islam in Southeast Asia*, ed. Khairudin Aljunied (London: Routledge, 2022), 13-29.

277 Ibid.

278 Khairudin Aljunied, "Bringing Rationality Back: Harun Nasution and the Burden of Muslim Thought in Twentieth-Century Southeast Asia." *Journal of Islamic and Muslim Studies* 6, no. 1 (2021): 29–55.

279 Andrew Simpson, "Indonesia," in *Language and National Identity in Asia*, ed. Andrew Simpson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 312-336.

280 Asmah Haji Omar, "Malaysia and Brunei," in *Language and National Identity in Asia*, 337-359.

281 Andaya, "The Introduction, Spread, and Circulation of Islam up to the Early Colonial Period in Southeast Asia."

282 Ibid.

283 Ibid., 24.

284 Barbara Watson Andaya, "Islam and Women in Precolonial Southeast Asia," in *Routledge Handbook of Islam in Southeast Asia*, 157-175.

285 Kristian Petersen, *Interpreting Islam in China: Pilgrimage, Scripture, and Language in the Han Kitab* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017).

286 Ibid., 45.

287 Ibid.

288 For a detailed study of China's female mosques, see Maria Jaschok and Shui Jingjun, *The History of Women's Mosques in Chinese Islam: A Mosque of Their Own* (Richmond: Curzon, 2000).

289 Ibid.

290 Rian Thum, *The Sacred Routes of Uyghur History* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014).

291 Rachel Harris and Aziz Isa, "Islam by Smartphone: Reading the Uyghur Islamic Revival on WeChat," *Central Asian Survey* 38, no. 1 (2019): 61-80.

292 See Michael Kemper and Shamil Shikhaliev, "Kunta-Hajji," *EI3*; Clemens Sidorko, "al-Ghazi Ghumuqi," *EI3*.

293 Nathan Spannaus, "al-Marjani, Shihab al-Din," *EI3*.

294 Brown, *Hadith*.

295 See Ibid., Ch. 10.

296 For a detailed discussion, see Ibid., Ch. 9.

297 Sara Konrath, Shariq Siddiqui, and Saulat Pervez, "Muslim Education Reform: Prioritizing Empathy and Philanthropic Acts," *Journal of Education in Muslim societies* 2, no. 2 (2021): 31–56; see section titled "Philanthropy and Education in Muslim Societies."

298 Emad Hamdeh, *Salafism and Traditionalism: Scholarly Authority in Modern Islam* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2021), 204.

299 El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics*; according to him, the classical period of Muslim scholarship was ninth to fifteenth centuries CE and the postclassical period consisted of sixteenth to nineteenth centuries CE. However, these terms and their time periods are contested. For instance, El-Tobgui, *Ibn Taymiyya on Reason and Revelation*, situates Ibn Taymiyya, who died in the 8th century AH/14th century CE, in the postclassical period because he takes the first five or six centuries of Islam to be its classical period. Brown, *Hadith*, refers to a "Late Sunni Tradition" that began in the 1300s CE up till modern times. Scholars also define these periods differently depending on their field of study. For example, Johanna Pink considers the classical period of Qur'anic *tafsir* to be from 10th century CE with the postclassical period taking place from the 14th through the 19th centuries CE, whereas Robert Wisnovsky defines the classical period of *falsafa* to be from 800-1200 CE and the postclassical one from 1100-1900 CE. See Pink, "Classical Qur'anic Hermeneutics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Qur'anic Studies*, and Wisnovsky, "The Nature and Scope of Arabic Philosophical Commentary in Post-Classical (ca. 1100-1900 AD) Islamic Intellectual History: Some Preliminary Observations," *Bulletin - Institute of Classical Studies* 47, no. S83PART2 (2004): 149–191.

300 El Shamsy paraphrases Ibn Hanbal's warning to his students: "written discourse possesses its own momentum, which mirrors that of *ra'y*: one book, such as Malik's, invites another, such as al-Shafi'i's, which in turn prompts further responses, refutations, and counterrefutations in an endless sequence" (El Shamsy, *The Canonization of Islamic Law*, 223). A modern example of this can be seen in the retaliatory treatises written by traditionalist scholars as well as al-Albani and his students (see Hamdeh, *Salafism and Traditionalism* (see Hamdeh, *Salafism and Traditionalism*, 52-58).

301 El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics*.

302 Ibid. Much of the information about scholars and their works can be found in the biographical texts called *Tabaqat*. One of the earliest *Tabaqat* text, consisting of eight volumes, was written by Ibn Sa'd (d. 230). Additionally, the bookseller Ibn al-Nadim's (d. 380) *Fihrist*, a bibliography of all the books in his inventory, "provided Arab intellectuals

and correctors … with a map to the ocean of Arabic manuscripts by situating works within their times and genres and by charting the intellectual affiliations of their authors, which the postclassical teaching tradition had forgotten or suppressed" (88).

303 Ibid.

304 Hamdeh, *Salafism and Traditionalism*. Hamdeh adds that this situation has become exacerbated in the age of the internet and digital information.

305 Ibid. Hamdeh notes that Sherman Jackson's definition of *taqlid* as "deference to precedent is more accurate because it represents the utilization and capacity of *taqlid* in Islamic law" (1). Jackson adds that jurists followed the opinions of their predecessors because they lent authority and validity to their views, not because they were incapable of conducting *ijtihad* themselves. See Sherman Jackson, "*Ijtihad* and *Taqlid*: Between the Islamic Legal Tradition and Autonomous Western Reason," in *Routledge Handbook of Islamic Law*, ed. Khaled Abou El Fadl, Ahmad Atif Ahmad, and Said Fares Hassan (New York: Routledge, 2019).

306 Brown, *Hadith*.

307 El Shamsy, *Rediscovering the Islamic Classics*, 171.

308 Brown, *Hadith*, 278: "Although they did not abandon the classical Islamic tradition, these movements sought to revaluate it and revive Islam's primordial greatness by breaking with *taqlid* (unquestioning loyalty to existing institutions and tradition) and embracing *ijtihad* (independent reasoning based on the original sources of Islam – the Quran and Sunna). Many of these revivalist scholars believed that they were just as capable as classical masters like al-Shafiʿi and Abu Hanifa of deriving laws directly from the Quran and the Prophet's teachings." El-Rouayheb clarifies that for nonjurists the opposite of *taqlid* was *tahqiq* (verification), not *ijtihad*; see his discussion on *taqlid* and *ijtihad* in *Islamic Intellectual History in the Seventeenth Century*, 357-9.

309 Ermin Sinanović, "Islamic Revival as Development: Discourses on Islam, Modernity and Democracy since the 1950s," *Politics, Religion & Ideology* 13, no. 1 (2012): 3-24.

310 Tareen, *Defending Muḥammad in Modernity*.

311 Ibid.

312 The concept of the "ideal Muslim woman" was evident in other parts of the Muslim world as well, such as Iran, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia.

313 Darakhshan Khan, "In Good Company: Reformist Piety and Women's Daʿwat in the Tablīghī Jamāʿat," *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 35, no. 3 (July 2018): 1–33.

314 Ibid.

315 Ibid.

316 Norbani B. Ismail, "Female Preachers and the Public Discourse on Islam in Malaysia," *The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 33, no. 4 (2016): 24–47.

317 For details on how some Uzbek women operate religious schools in their homes, see Svetlana Peshkova, *Women, Islam, and Identity: Public Life in Private Spaces in Uzbekistan* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2014).

318 For recent engagement on this topic, see Shuruq Naguib, "Islam and the Epistemic Politics of Gender: A Decolonial Moment," *American Journal of Islam and Society* 38, no. 1-2 (2021): 2-19; Hadia Mubarak, *Rebellious Wives, Neglectful Husbands: Controversies in Modern Qur'anic Commentaries* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022).

319 Brown, *Hadith*.

320 Ibid.

321 Ibid.

322 Ibid.

323 Ibid.

324 Ibid., 295.

325 Ibid. See Hamdeh, *Salafism and Traditionalism*, 24ff on the various differences among Salafis.

326 Emad Hamdeh, "Qurʾān and Sunna or the Madhhabs? A Salafi Polemic Against Islamic Legal Tradition," *Islamic Law and Society* 24, no. 3 (June 2017): 211–253.

327 Ibid. Hamdeh explains, "The fall of the Ottoman Empire and the rise of secular governments in the Muslim world resulted in a decline of Traditionalist *'ulama* authority and pedagogical methods. As Traditionalist scholars lost their powerful positions, a vacuum in religious authority emerged. These changes took Traditionalists by surprise and some of them held on to the *madhhab*s in a very rigid fashion as a way of rejecting secularism. Albani grew up in this atmosphere of unbending *madhhab*ism, which contributed to his disdain for Traditionalists" (216).

328 Ibid.

329 Emad Hamdeh, "The Formative Years of an Iconoclastic Salafi Scholar," *The Muslim World* 106, no. 3 (July 2016): 411–432.

330 Hamdeh, "Qurʾān and Sunna or the Madhhabs?"

331 Ibid., 218. Hamdeh adds, "Had he conceded that his conclusions involved an interpretive process he would not have been able to claim to depend only on scripture. In other words, instead of Salafism being based on the absolute truth it would just be another *madhhab* trying to understand texts" (218).

332 Hamdeh, *Salafism and Traditionalism*.

333 Ibid.

334 Ibid.

335 Hamdeh, "The Formative Years."

336 Hamdeh, *Salafism and Traditionalism*, 118.

337 This was severely criticized by al-Albani. See Hamdeh, "The Formative Years," 421-424.

338 Brown, *Hadith*.

339 Hamdeh, *Salafism and Traditionalism*.

340 Brown, *Hadith*.

341 Hamdeh, *Salafism and Traditionalism*.

342 See Tareen, *Defending Muhammad in Modernity*, 15-24. This simplistic dichotomy is in clear contradiction with what has been discussed earlier, that "following the Sufi path requires adherence to the dictates of the law" (19).

343 For the purposes of this article, I have adapted Maha Hilal's discussion of internalized Islamophobia in the context of War on Terror. See her *Innocent Until Proven Muslim: Islamophobia, The War on Terror, and the Muslim Experience since 9/11* (Minneapolis: Broadleaf Books, 2021).